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THE

# ECLECTIC REVIEW,

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CONTENTS :—JANUARY, 1867.

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	PAGE
I. GEORGE THE THIRD ; HIS CHARACTER, LIFE AND TIMES.	1
II. ANNALS OF A QUIET NEIGHBOURHOOD.....	27
III. LIFE INSIDE THE MONASTERY.....	42
IV. THE DUKE OF ARGYLL ON THE REIGN OF LAW.....	53
V. THE EDITOR IN HOT WATER.....	62
VI. OUR BOOK CLUB .....	69

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CONTENTS OF THE DECEMBER NUMBER.

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- I. THE STORY OF A HUGUENOT.
- II. RECENT CONTRIBUTIONS TO FOLK LORE.
- III. RALEIGH'S "STORY OF JONAH THE PROPHET."
- IV. THE SUPERSTITION AND ROMANCE OF SPANISH ART.
- V. MR. SWINBURNE, HIS CRIMES AND HIS CRITICS.
- VI. QUEVEDO REDIVIVUS.—"LETTERS FROM HELL."
- VII. OUR BOOK CLUB



# THE ECLECTIC, ETC.

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## I.

### GEORGE THE THIRD; HIS CHARACTER, LIFE, AND TIMES.\*

READERS, whatever their cast of political conviction, could only expect delightful volumes from the pen of Mr. Heneage Jesse; and these three volumes will abundantly sustain, if they do not exceed, all such expectations; they are a most amusing, and instructive, and effective *melange* of anecdote. Much has been written about George the Third; and the story of his times and reign, forming as it does so large a cycle, is contained in so vast a variety of books and biographies, of many coloured incidents and impressions—it is, moreover, unpopular, as its chief aspects have usually been; so really important and distinct a *siècle* in itself, it seems so separated by the length of its period from what went before in English history; the closing years are so manifestly the transition to the great and magnificent age of English splendor which followed it, and which will, no doubt, be best described in future as the Victorian Era,—that the gathering-up of its chief points into one well-illustrated *coup d'œil*, must not only be, if well done, very interesting and entertaining, but not less important. We do not remember any work, unless we make an exception for the charming chapters in Lord Mahon's history, in which the task is so effectively wrought out as in the work before us.

Mr. Jesse is not, in the modern sense, a historian; he indulges in no philosophic disquisition, either upon events or characters; he is brim full of anecdote; no books necessary to the elucidation of his subject seem to have escaped him; and, in describing men or women, he seems to prefer little well authenticated anecdotes or incidents to the attempting after any

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\**Memoirs of the Life and Reign of George the Third.*—By J. Heneage Jesse. Three volumes :—Tinsley.

philosophical or metaphysical analysis—to read the innermost spring of their life and its motives ; it is a book, once taken up, large as it is, not likely to be laid down until the reader reaches its mournful and pathetic close—a quiet, catholic, kindly wisdom pervades its pages—no strong and passionate denunciations or invectives, or even apologies, stir within the reader either hostility or partisanship ; it almost reads like the book of an old chronicler ; and, assuredly, love and sympathy for the king never much loved, and for the most part remembered rather with contempt, if not anger, than reverence, rises to the reader's mind. Perhaps no work has ever so distinctly set forth the very difficult part he had to play ; the conscience and the goodness ; the meek and humble religious faith with which he strove to perform his very difficult tasks ; his personal holiness united, sometimes upon occasions where men apparently of higher character shrunk back, to a true kingly chivalry. Mr. Jesse sets the king forth well in the light of his own acts and words, and in those great public transactions which it was his work to endeavour to command and control—the court and the cabinet, the careers and cabals of the successive generations of statesmen who passed through the council-chambers of the king ; his private home life, and its manifold sorrows ; his domestic disappointments in that region where it might be supposed if any man deserved to be happy and at rest, it was he—all these, with their appropriate scenes and actors, the author makes to live, with very considerable distinctness, before the eye of the reader.

With few predilections in favour of George the Third ourselves, we believe the impression produced upon the minds of most readers at the close of these volumes, whatever previous impressions have been, will be a large increase of sympathy, reverence, and affection, sometimes rising to more than ordinary admiration, for the sad, yet cheerful, the sustained, yet mournfully chequered life of the old king.

George the Third succeeded to the crown of England in October, 1760, at the age of twenty-two. He was born in 1738 ; he was a seven-months' child, and there seemed little probability that he would long survive his birth. He was the son of the Prince of Wales, the vain and frivolous eldest son of George the Second. "Vain and frivolous" has usually been the estimate of his character ; but the outline presented to us in the early pages of this work, of his plan for the education of his eldest children, exhibits a true fatherly interest and wisdom—he died, however, in 1751, leaving his eldest son the expectant heir to the throne. His grandfather, George the



Second, seems to have been a severe and probably unprincipled guardian. Brave as a soldier, there is little about him which can attract admiration—his social character was more than exceptionable; it was the age when party spirit in the court ran very high—and the failures of George the Third, as a monarch, may surely be attributed to that narrow code and scheme of education, which narrowed his naturally not wide mind after the death of his father. The accounts which reach us of the character of the young prince, represent him with every light of kindliness and amiability. Only on one occasion have we any knowledge of his overstepping the strict boundaries of chastity—our readers will, of course, anticipate that we allude to the still unsolved romance of Hannah Lightfoot, the beautiful Quakeress. We say the still unsolved—for, however the recent decision in the law courts, with reference to the claims of the “Princess Olive,” may have set that apparently insane matter at rest, it still leaves a cloud of mystery over the whole transaction. Whether, when she left the home of her highly respectable friends, she left as the mistress, or the wife of the Prince of Wales, there is perhaps no evidence to show, or indeed, whether she left in any relation to him whatever; and whether Mr. Jesse’s theory of a marriage which took place, and which made Hannah Lightfoot Mrs. Axford, by which name she is designated in the likeness of her by Sir Joshua Reynolds, now in Knowle Park, for the double purpose of preventing the infatuated Prince from marrying her, and thus also forestalling any possible future claim of legitimacy. It is very certain that, at that time, marriages could be shamefully performed; what thread of probability it is possible to follow through this dark story, seems to make it plain that the husband, Isaac Axford, was bound over never to present any claim upon his wife—the *on dits* of the period described the Prince, at any rate, as seeing her repeatedly afterwards, certainly until his marriage. Yet little or nothing is very authentically known about her, except that she survived the King; dying, in 1821, at a little villa, where she had lived long in perfect seclusion in the remote, yet suburban district of the country, then called the Hackney Road. Quite enough of this, upon which so many prurient tastes and curiosities have long expended their energies; and all in vain. Assuredly there is little in the whole story, or any surmises connected with it, like the clear, dignified, and conscientious behaviour of the king. We are speaking, however, we suppose, of that period of his life between his seventeenth and twenty-second years. Suddenly, at Kensington Palace, on the 25th of October, 1760, in his seventy-seventh year, without giving the

slightest notice to anybody, George the Second slipped away from the country it was no very easy thing to govern; and, in his twenty-third year, the young king commenced his long, and we think we must say, in spite of what England did during that sixty years, his confused reign. A little gleam of hearty popular favour flashed round him to welcome him to the throne—the last had not been heard of the Pretender—he was living then, but he was a poor disgraced voluptuary; and the new heir assumed the crown with a stronger sense of right and assurance than any of his German predecessors.

At that moment, England was illustrated by a blaze of glory, than which no succeeding lustre in her history has been brighter—the magnificent enchantments of the Elder Pitt had just proved their power; and conquests for the arms of England, and achievements for her commerce, as the result of his supremacy, made his name the glory and boast of every Englishman. It was the unfortunate result of the new king's bias and education, that his very first act was to push from him that magnificent arm of strength which overawed the nations of Europe, while it commanded the leaders of the great parties at home. Pitt, however, and the great nobles who ranked round him, were regarded by the king as not only menacing the foes of England, but also overawing even the throne of England itself. And this power it was the king's first determination to break. It is impossible not to perceive, even from the most unpartisan-like pages of Mr. Jesse, that this determination hurried the king into his long career of political troubles; from the tyranny of the minister of the hour he did not escape—and his tyrants, like Bute or Granville, could only fill him with indignation at their absolutism over him, while they had not the master-genius to compel and control parties and circumstances to their side. However that might be, time had to show; and, for the present, one king had to be buried out of the way, and another to be crowned. "The king is dead! God save the king!" Of the funeral, Horace Walpole has left us, in his letters, a graphic description; he walked in the procession.

The coronation was reserved for a little later day; and, before that event, the royal marriage was to take place—an affair which it was highly desirable should be settled as early as possible; for, whatever curiosities of speculation may exist about Hannah Lightfoot, a more real danger, at any rate to some of the great parties in England, was near at hand; and a nobler, if not a more lovely girl, in the person of Lady Sarah Lennox, the youngest daughter of the second Duke of Richmond, who had thrown her meshes completely round the young king. In

those days, he was disposed to reject the suggestions of his courtiers for a foreign marriage; and expressed his convictions that an English one would be much more desirable. He commanded himself, however, in obedience to his own and his minister's representations of duty; there is no doubt, we believe, that he desired to marry Lady Sarah; and it would seem the ambition of her father looked, at any rate for a moment, toward such a possibility. The king broke from the chains of the young beauty, whom he was fond of visiting on fine summer mornings at Holland House, and with whom, after the simpler fashion of those times, he strolled through the hay-fields, or accompanied for the morning's ride on horseback; but he never forgot her, through years of faithfulness and duty. Still, in his old age, some passing resemblance would bring up the name of Lady Sarah to his lips; and it may not be out of place to mention that she survived him, dying in 1826, in her eighty-second year, completely blind—perhaps some would think illustrious, as the last surviving grand-daughter of Charles the Second—more illustrious as the mother of the great soldier, Sir William Napier.

But, for the present, the king, disappointed in his desire to share his throne with Lady Sarah, had to look about in other directions for a wife; and his choice alighted on Sophia Charlotte, the youngest daughter of the Duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz—then in her eighteenth year. “There were not half-a-dozen men in England,” says Horace Walpole, “who knew that such a princess existed. Lord Harcourt is to be at her father's court, *if he can find it*, on the first of August; and the coronation of both their majesties is fixed for the 22nd of September.” This was the lady who, for sixty years to come, was to set the example of piety and virtue to the people of this country; to share her royal husband's constantly succeeding public and private troubles. Of all these, there was no hint. At present, England was a great nation; the sovereign of England, at that moment, even, the representative of the strongest arm of national strength; and it was something surprising to the young princess, to find herself suddenly called from her German obscurity to a rank of such regal splendour. Arrived in England, their coronation took place a fortnight after their marriage, amidst circumstances of extraordinary splendour for those times.

Amidst the blaze of lights, suddenly flashing into lustre as the royal pair entered the great hall of Rufus, it is not uninteresting to know, surely—that, from the galleries, as a disguised spectator, looking down, we may conceive with what emotions, over



the whole scene, sat no other than the young hero of Prestonpans himself, the Pretender, who had the courage, it would seem, on the best authority, to place himself there, and survey the tide of grandeur and splendour which, but for certain changes of chance or providence, would have been in honour of himself. David Hume says: "You see the story is traced so nearly from the fountain-head as to wear a great face of probability. What if the Pretender had taken up Dymock's gauntlet?" It is said that one of the noblemen who knew the Pretender—of course one of the great tory lords—said to him—"Your royal highness is the last of all mortals I should have expected to see here;" and the Prince—we suppose we may give him that title—replied, "It was curiosity that led me; but I assure you," added he, "that the person who is the object of all this pomp and magnificence, is the person I envy least." The instincts of superstition ran deep in the blood of the Stuarts; and if this remark were made late on in the entertainment, we can find no difficulty in believing the Pretender; for our readers have, perhaps, not forgotten the ill omens which seemed to gather to the apprehensions of the superstitious—when, in Westminster Hall, the very finest of all the royal jewels fell from the crown.

Mr. Jesse gathers a number of interesting analogies; some would certainly flash upon the memory of Charles James; such as the proclamation of Charles the First, by Sir Edward Zouch, at the court gate, as the *dubitable* instead of the *indubitable* heir to the throne—the falling to the ground of the gold head of the same monarch's cane, upon his trial in Westminster Hall; and the tottering of the crown upon the head of James the Second on his coronation. The Stuarts' was a family history full of omens. However that might be with them, when, twenty years afterwards, in 1782, the British crown lost its most splendid appanage in the North American Colonies, there were many persons who instantly remembered the portent of 1761. The circumstance found its way into the stray verse of the period:—

When first portentous it was known  
Great George had jostled from his crown  
The brightest diamond there,  
The omen-mongers, one and all,  
Foretold some mischief must befall;  
Some loss beyond compare.

And, indeed, it seemed as if the omen would realise itself more speedily. A month or two of popularity was all that the king ever knew; long years after, when, by his habitual association

in the thoughts of the people, they came to sympathise with his personal and domestic troubles, he received some flattering ovations; but the first great public occasion, after his coronation, in which he appeared with his young bride before his people, must have been more than wounding to his vanity, and suggestive of some clouds in the future to the thoughtful mind of his queen. He had, in fact, got rid of Pitt, the great darling of the people and the nation; he had broken the bondage of the throne beneath the great Whig confederacy; and he had called to his counsels, as his chief minister, Bute. When, therefore, only a short time after his coronation, he went to dine with the Lord Mayor, his entry with his unpopular minister into the city, proved anything but an entertainment. Pitt and Bute had both been invited by the city; and the city, through the whole line of the procession, swarmed with a mob, perhaps very different to a city mob now—for mobs change. The king, always anxious to preserve the affections of his people, rolled on in his great cumbrous state coach in perfect silence; scarce a handkerchief waved, scarce a voice cheered—it was the same when he entered the hall; his reception was perfectly chilling; there was scarce a sign of applause, as his health was drunk. In the line of route on Ludgate Hill, the carriage of Bute was mistaken for that of Pitt; and a roar of plaudits thundered along the whole line; but presently it was discovered it was the wrong carriage, and it was with difficulty the minister was saved from being dragged from his carriage, by an immense force of constables. He reached Guildhall in safety; and, in returning, adopted the wise expedient of eluding the mob, by availing himself of the carriage of the Lord Chancellor. Pitt has been exceedingly blamed that he accepted the invitation to the city that day. He had always been rather fond of his poverty; in the ages of speculation, both father and son were perhaps ostentatious in their proclamation that their hands were clean. When, therefore, he appeared in his poor carriage—we believe we are right in saying a hackney-coach—that kind of wild clamour and uproar with which contagious mobs greet their favourites seemed to proclaim him king of the nation—at any rate, the acknowledged conductor of its destinies; and, when he entered the hall, cold and undemonstrative a few moments before on the entrance of the king, the representatives of the city burst forth into the same enthusiasm and rapture as that from which he had escaped outside. There his statue still stands, embodying, as it seems to hurl thunders on the foes of England, the signal triumph of the “great commoner”

on that day. As to the blame attaching to him for going to the city at all, and putting himself apparently in competition with his king, it seems clear that he yielded himself to the advice of friends; but it seems not unnatural with the more proud, haughty, and dominant spirit which had so signally served England, that he should not be indisposed to give the king, who had certainly treated him with more than sufficient curtness, even for his purposes, a lesson. Yet a week or two, and the fruits of his strong acts and sagacious observation were yet more remarkably seen—another ministry was in power—had only just attained power—but it seemed as if Bute and his party were to be covered with laurels of foreign victory. The news came of a succession of victories—*islands captured from Spain, in the Western Indies*—but it was by Pitt's advice that such results were ultimately won. He made the discovery—and how, is a great state secret to this day—of the existence of a secret treaty between France and Spain. At the time, both his information and his counsels were disregarded. Unequal to the hour, the king and his ministers—none of them with any faculty beyond mere ordinary good sense—admirable stuff in its way, but singularly insufficient for detecting state intrigues, and coping with and counteracting the machinery of dissolute power, plunged on as best they could; but when events ripened and manifested themselves, it did not increase popular good temper, that the great treasure-ships of Spain were safely at anchor in the Bay of Cadiz—which, had Pitt's advice been taken, would have been towed in safety up the Thames, to pour their golden cargoes into the vaults of the Bank of England.

It was in these circumstances, however, that George the Third formed the first of his long series of unpopular ministries. He and the country lost the services, for ever, of the most commanding statesman of his age; and the young man entered, at the age of twenty-three, upon the cares of that monarchy which never, we believe, furnished him with anything much better than a crown of thorns. But then we are compelled to see that the crown was self-woven, by the fingers of an eminently obdurate—at least, a very firm nature, and a very narrow view of human needs and affairs.

We have dwelt so much at length upon this first political phase of the king's life, because we think its influence cannot be over-estimated, as colouring his whole course. He soon naturally found himself involved in singular popular commotions. We cannot doubt that the intense political strifes and agitations of his time, at last brought upon him that severe personal calamity which excited the sympathy of the whole



nation. A few months after his marriage and coronation—before the birth of his first child, afterwards George the Fourth; and when he had not reached his twenty-fourth year, he was seized by serious illness. This, however, the vigour of his constitution surmounted. His first ministry, one can suppose, must have been a grief to him. Bute, no doubt, deserved the opinion of Lord Chesterfield, “that he had honour, honesty, “and good intentions;” but he was proud, cold, cunning, and immensely unpopular. Ere long, however, an immense fortune fell into his hands; and the princely proprietor of Cardiff Castle and Luton did not care for the emoluments of that office, which only brought weariness, irritation, and care, without the corresponding compensation of fame. But some of those who wrought with him in the ministry were of a very different type. Lord Holland was regarded as the great rival of the elder Pitt; as his son, Charles James Fox, was the illustrious rival of the younger.

The elder Lord Holland is not a character to survey with any pleasure—the city of London charged him with being a public defaulter of unaccounted millions. We may distrust the justice of this very nervous language; and still, with Mr. Jesse, believe that he enriched himself by means which a high-minded statesman would have blushed at, even in contemplating. “We must “call in bad men,” said the king to George Grenville, “to “govern bad men;” it reveals to us where the conscience of the king pinched,—but the adjective had two very different significations—Pitt, and we believe the representatives of his party, but Pitt especially, was singularly pure and incorruptible. The badness of the new men was really in their utter chartered license, and their apparent freedom from all sense of moral relationship.

Sir Francis Dashwood, the minister of finance, was one of whom a wit of that day said, that a sum of five figures was an impenetrable secret to him. Sir Francis himself laughed at his own incompetency. “People,” he said, “will point at me in “the street; and say, ‘there goes the worst Chancellor of the “Exchequer that ever appeared.’” He was a rich creature for a Chancellor of the Exchequer, this! Mr. Jesse gives us what is certainly an entertaining insight to his character and habits:

Sir Francis was the only son of Sir Francis Dashwood, Baronet, by Lady Mary Fane, daughter of Vere, fourth Earl of Westmoreland. In his political opinions he was a Tory; he had formerly been an uncompromising Jacobite. Although gifted neither with eloquence nor with eminent administrative ability, his blunt and hearty manner of speak-

ing in the House of Commons had obtained for him a reputation for political honesty and strong sense. In his youth he had travelled over many countries, and in private life was an eminently entertaining and agreeable companion. Here, however, our encomiums of him must cease. Lax as were the morals of the age in which he lived, it may be questioned whether he was surpassed by any one of his contemporaries in profaneness, obscenity, and vice. His wild and irreverent frolics were the constant talk of his time. One of them, which occurred at Rome, will suffice to satisfy the curiosity of the reader. Formerly, it seems, on a Good Friday in the Holy City, it was the custom for a devotee, on entering the Sistine Chapel for the purpose of performing self-penance, to receive from the attendant at the door a small whip, with which, at a certain signal, he was required to scourge himself. The chapel was lighted by three candles only, which were extinguished one by one, at brief intervals of time, by the priest. On the blowing out of the first candle, the penitents divested themselves of their upper garments. A second candle was then extinguished, on which a further disrobement took place; and lastly, on the blowing out of the third candle, which, left the chapel in complete darkness, the several penitents commenced flagellating themselves, giving vent at the same time to appropriate groans and lamentations. It was on one of these occasions, that Sir Francis, having provided himself with a formidable riding-whip, which he concealed beneath his upper coat, took the small scourge from the attendant and, advancing to the further end of the chapel, placed himself demurely among the devotees. On the extinction of the third candle he proceeded to put in practice the unjustifiable joke which he had projected. Drawing his riding-whip from beneath his coat, he commenced laying it about him right and left till he reached the chapel door; the penitents all the while believing that the Evil One was among them, and shrieking out "*Il diavolo! Il diavolo!*" In the confusion, Sir Francis contrived to effect his escape. The outrage, however, was subsequently traced to him, and accordingly no choice was left to him but to make the best of his way out of the Papal dominions.

This interesting person was the founder of the "Dilletanti Club;" the qualification for admission into which, according to Horace Walpole, was "to get drunk."

George Grenville, who speedily succeeded Bute as the chief minister, was a man of eminent incapacity; although he ruled and frightened the king into submission for a long period. He was the "gentle shepherd" of Lord Chatham, in an anecdote too well known to need repeating here—his great virtue was the power of indefatigable drudgery—his next great virtue, a dry, astute assumption of eminent wisdom. The House of Commons never would treat him with respect, even when he was the first minister of the Crown; he sat in the house night after night, shaking his head; and it was on one of those occa-

sions, that Sir Fletcher Norton said, "I wish the right "honourable gentleman, instead of shaking his head, would "shake an argument out of it." He was miserably mean in his economy of the administration; at the same time ludicrously punctilious in his attention to the Journals of the House; and, on the celebrated occasion when he was taken ill in the house, and fainted; while several of the members were crying for "ammonia" and "water," the witty and wicked George Selwyn said: "Pooh! pooh! why don't you give him the "Journals to smell to?" This pleasant man had been scarcely a month at the head of the treasury, when he got the king and the city of London into a nice little domestic quagmire; which, although of no importance now, had an aspect ugly enough then. He got the king and government to loggerheads with Wilkes, the celebrated or notorious, whichever the reader likes—John Wilkes, one of the most amusing, ingenious, and effective scoundrels that the booths of shifting popularity have ever exhibited. He was an utterly unprincipled man; but it was impossible to get out of temper with him, he was so amusing and adroit—a perfect Marionette of the public of that time. Spread over Mr. Jesse's volumes, the reader will find a sufficiently lengthy and complete account of an amusing man, with as large a stock of the eggs of mischief ready for hatching, as we believe was ever possessed by any mortal. Who has not seen Hogarth's picture of him, and that immortal diabolical squint? Once that portrait was conspicuous on a tenth part of all the sign-boards in England; and the rascal used to relate himself, with great gusto, how he once saw an old lady intently looking up at one newly suspended—and, after the proper amount of close inspection, turning away and saying to a companion "Ah! he hangs everywhere but where he ought to hang!" He was marvellously clever—one of the few spirits of that age who, like his friend, Sir Francis Dashwood, attained an extraordinary preeminence in licentiousness. The impurities of Medmenham Abbey are known only by tradition—may they never be better known! Christianity was treated there with a horrible enormity of blasphemous rite that almost makes us shudder. Wilkes was the high priest in these orgies. Having run through a splendid fortune, he betook himself to patriotism—as Dr. Johnson defines it, the "last refuge of a scoundrel." He had no great gift of public speech, but his manners, conversation and whole behaviour in private, his coolness and effrontery, brought every person who ever came within the reach of his speech, to his feet. No circumstances daunted him. Speaking in the House of



Commons once, when the house was very impatient, a friend begged him to desist, and not to speak. "Speak!" he said, "I must; my speech has been in all the newspapers this half-hour." On another occasion, on the hustings at Brentford, standing by the side of his rival candidate, Colonel Luttrell, contesting the representation of the county of Middlesex—looking down upon the immense sea of heads, for the most part his own votaries and friends, he whispered to his opponent: "I wonder whether in that crowd there are more knaves or fools?" "I'll tell them what you say," said the astonished Luttrell; "and put an end to you." Perceiving that Wilkes treated the affair with perfect indifference; he said, "surely you don't think you could stand one hour after I did so?" "Why not?" said Wilkes, "It is you who would not be alive an instant after." "How so?" said Luttrell. "Because," said Wilkes, "I should merely affirm that it was all a fabrication; and they would destroy you in the twinkling of an eye." He had humour, satire, wrote with rapidity and vigour; some have even assigned to him the authorship of "Junius." And this was the man with whom George Grenville got up a battle, and converted a pseudo-patriot into a great distinguished, political martyr—the very thing Wilkes wanted; the very worst thing the government could do. For some publications in the *North Briton*, his house was entered; and he was seized and imprisoned for libel. As a member of the House of Commons, Wilkes was exempt from arrest for libel. London was in a fury; and when Lord Camden pronounced his judgment in favour of Wilkes, in Westminster Hall, there rang such a peal along from those old arches, through Westminster, and down to the city—that the government discovered, too late, their suicidal act. They had made the insect Wilkes into a perfect hornet, or captain of a hornet's nest—capable of plaguing, tormenting, and stinging—all which he did to his own infinite delight and easy amusement for years to come.

The behaviour of the ministry and their party in the House of Commons very much justifies the criticism of Lord Chesterfield upon them: "There is not a man among them with abilities, or words enough to call a coach." Then the king, too late, sought Pitt; and the wary old gentleman was closetted with the king; and no doubt said and did a great many things—but he would not take office. The king had increased, by his behaviour, the remoteness and the intensity of party—and things had to continue beneath the hierophantic wisdom of Grenville again. Uninstructed by last year's misadventures, he got up another unwise prosecution of Wilkes; the story is



very entertaining—the state of London at that time has often been made the theme of the descriptions of romancists. It was most unhappy that the sovereign should be put into collision with the subject—that subject every way worthless, as compared with his sovereign; and yet, who was tricky enough in his unprincipledness to win for himself again an important acquittal in Westminster Hall; and, of course, the ecstatic and enthusiastic cheers of the mob; “Wilkes and Liberty,” rang like a wild Highland battle-cry from London throughout the country; the people seized every opportunity of deifying their idol, and throwing insult on the government. Wilkes, indeed, was lying sick in his chamber; wounded in a duel with one Martin, a member of the House; but he very likely made the most of his illness; and the “many-headed, monster thing” took care that his wrongs were avenged.

When, by sentence of the government, number forty-five of the *North Briton* was condemned to be burned by the hand of the hangman; as he was about to commit it to the flames, the cry of “Wilkes and Liberty!” rang through the crowd; the officers were put to flight; from the balconies and windows of neighbouring houses, gentlemen of birth and education were seen cheering on the mob; the sheriff’s carriage was smashed, and he struck by a burning brand; and, instead of the *North Briton*, a jack-boot (a rough pun upon Lord Bute), and a petticoat (a vulgar allusion to the Princess Dowager of Wales, who was supposed to influence Lord Bute), were cast into the flames. So, when, some months after, the printer of number forty-five was sentenced to stand in the pillory; the mob surrounding him collected, and presented him on the spot with two hundred guineas; a gibbet was erected, on which were suspended a boot and Scotch bonnet, and the printer was carried off in triumph in a Hackney coach corresponding in number forty-five. Wilkes, however, was expelled the House of Commons, and would have been subject to other penalties, but he fled to France! There he remained for a few years, considering his ways, but not with the intention of changing his course. The Duchess de Pompadour put the question to him, “How far he considered a libeller in England could, with impunity, abuse the Royal Family?” “Madame,” he said, “that is exactly what I am trying to find out;” and, when he had sufficiently studied the matter, he returned to play off yet wilder pranks upon the country, and more seriously to involve the Government and the King.

Mr. Jesse’s volumes are not merely the story of the domestic life of George the Third—the domestic life of a sovereign can scarcely ever be separated from his public life; but these

volumes, while we see the personality of the king from page to page, give more than glimpses of the social state of the period. Exactly one hundred years have passed by, and nothing is more surprising to us than the frequent recurrence of mobs and riots in London in those times. No doubt they were all created by political tricksters and intriguants; probably Wilkes himself was something of a tool in the hands of the great anti-court party. Then followed the great Weaver's riots; in allusion to which, Lord Holland himself said, "What might not an artful man do with those mobs?" Artful enough he was, and the probability is that he tolerably well knew what to do with them. We shall have occasion to refer to this feature, especially of the earlier periods of George the Third's reign, again. Meantime, the year 1766 beheld the emerging of that question which so seriously shaded, and diminished for the time, the glory of England; it was to the confusing and consummately pig-headed policy of George Grenville, that England was indebted, in the first instance, for the loss of her American colonies. That they ever could have been retained long to the crown of England, seems neither probable nor natural. Yet Pitt, perhaps, nay, assuredly, would have retained them; he voted for the repeal of the objectionable Stamp Act. "I have my doubts," he exclaimed, alluding to Grenville, "if any member could have been found, who would have dared to dip the royal ermine in the blood of the American people." But, of course, we shall not follow Mr. Jesse through all his details of this great national circumstance; only, perhaps to notice that the agitations consequent upon these great circumstances, produced those first intimations and fears for the King's mental health, which ripened at last into so serious a domestic and national calamity. In the midst of all these discussions, Wilkes returned; he had been outlawed, yet he hoped to obtain a reversal of his outlawry, and some lucrative appointment under Government; he made his appearance in England on the eve of a general election—it might easily be seen what that meant; probably, multitudes of his old worshippers had forgotten him, but he took means to make himself known—the Government did not dare to arrest him. At the election for the city, he was only in time to present himself as the seventh candidate; he lost his election, but his carriage was drawn in triumph by the mob from the Guildhall to his residence, and then the riots began. He presented himself for Middlesex, and was ultimately triumphantly returned at the head of the poll. The mob broke out into the most uproarious licentiousness. No person was allowed to pass the streets who had not the blue riband, and the ticket inscribed "Wilkes and

Liberty." "Wilkes and Liberty" were on every tongue; "Squinting Wilkes and Liberty," writes Gilly Williams to George Selwyn, "are everything with us." Another of the wits commenced one of his letters, "I take the "Wilkes and Liberty" to assure you." One grieves that a Government should have been so incapable and weak; they conferred a dignity upon him which, but for illegality and persecution, he never could have attained, which became important property to him; while, assuredly he was a man who well knew how to use all their slips, and turn them to his own account; he had been expelled the House of Commons some years since. Upon his return for Middlesex, the House refused to receive him; when the election took place again, not only was he carried at the head of the poll, but only five votes were recorded for his opponent; and thus, in riot and injustice the days went on. He was again rejected by the House. The King's Bench was surrounded by Wilkes' lawless followers; and the king expressed his readiness and wish, and, indeed, determination, in case the rioters approached his house—which he expressed a desire they might do—to issue out, and disperse them himself at the head of his guards. Indeed, blood was shed; and, as is so usually the case, innocent blood; and the funeral of the young man, Allan, who seems to have been wholly innocent of any complicity in the matter, created a strong feeling of national wrath. The career of this Wilkes is so entertaining, that we have given more time to it than we can well justify; but years went along, and still the tumults continued. The City of London took up his cause. He became an alderman of the city, out of pure honour to the principles he was supposed to represent; he became Lord Mayor and Chamberlain, representing the cause of liberty in active battle with the courtly and ministerial—in fact, the kingly party. He became the Chamberlain of the City of London; and after the tempests, in which he had moved as the ruling spirit of the demagogue, it is quite instructive to see what became of him. He became very wealthy, rising to grand civic honours; he ceased to be a patriot; he became a courtier, and actually frequently attended the *levées* of George the Third. On one of those occasions, the good-natured king, as we can conceive, with his kind smile, asked after Wilkes's old friend, Serjeant Glynn, who had been his counsel during the libel and sedition prosecutions. "My friend, Sir?" exclaimed Wilkes; "he is no friend of mine; he is a Wilkite, Sir, which I never was." As a magistrate, he discharged his duties with praiseworthy zeal and alacrity. During the Lord George Gordon riots, he seized the publisher



of a seditious paper; and when an attack was made by rioters on the Bank of England, Mr. Alderman Wilkes headed the party which drove them away. When he dined with the Prince of Wales, many years after, even at the moment when he heard the Prince speaking rather disparagingly of his father, with whom he was then on notoriously bad terms, Wilkes seized the opportunity of proposing the health of the king. "Why, Wilkes," said the Prince, "how long is it since you have become so loyal?" "Ever since, Sir," was the reply, "I had the honour of becoming acquainted with your royal highness." Peculation and corruption, in high places, continued; but Wilkes—over whose last resting-place is inscribed—"The remains of John Wilkes, a friend to liberty,"—never raised his voice to rebuke the sin, or to vindicate the virtue; but he lived, although weak, and diseased, to be in his last days, still, as in his youngest, the irresistible charm of every circle in conversation, and died in his mansion in Grosvenor Street, in the seventy-first year of his age. We have said so much about him, because he was one of the very chief troublers of the early years of the reign of George the Third. The social circumstances he was able, as a demagogue, with such hypocritical magic to evolve, greatly illustrate the character of the times; and his public career singularly illustrates how dangerous and powerful an imbecile ministry may make a capable and unprincipled man.

The important matters of America, we have said, we leave altogether. As years passed on in the life of the king, his family round him became large; his own domestic character, in its various unfoldings, is drawn in a very interesting manner by Mr. Jesse. Kew House was the palace where his most homely days were passed. The palace, indeed, where he spent the first years of his married life, is no more:—

The old palace of Kew—with its delightful gardens and its crowd of agreeable local associations—is still an object of interest and curiosity to thousands. It should be borne in mind, however, that the present palace is not the same structure which, in the days of Frederick, Prince of Wales, was known as Kew House, and which, after the death of his widow, when it had become the residence of George the Third, was distinguished as the Queen's Lodge. The "Queen's Lodge," no vestige of which now remains, stood opposite to the present red-brick mansion; the two edifices having in former days been separated by a public carriage-road which ran from Kew Green to Brentford Ferry. Then, and long after the divergence of the ferry-road, the present palace was known indifferently as the Prince's House and the Royal Nursery; names which it successively derived from the Prince

of Wales and other children of George the Third having been reared within its walls. After the demolition of the Queen's Lodge, which commenced in 1802, the present mansion became the occasional residence of George the Third and his consort.

As we have already observed, the gardens of Kew House are replete with interesting associations. It was in the cool shade of its shrubberies that the frivolous Frederick, Prince of Wales, listened to the brilliant wit of Chesterfield and Pulteney. Here he might be seen exhibiting his flower beds to Pope, or listening to the scandal and gossip of Bubb Dodington; and, lastly, it was along these walks that he was induced to hearken to the insidious reasonings of Bolingbroke and Sir William Wyndham, by whom he was only too easily persuaded that Sir Robert Walpole was the wickedest of Ministers and his own father the weakest of Kings. Here, at other times, the Prince might be seen retiring into the more "gloomy alleys" with Lady Middlesex; while, in the more frequented walks, and at a respectful distance from them, strolled side by side his neglected Princess and Lord Bute; the former listening with satisfaction to the pompous compliments paid her by the favourite, and occasionally glancing, with perhaps too much complacency, on the proportions of his exquisitely turned leg. In these walks it was, that Bute first infused into the youthful mind of George the Third those Utopian and pernicious doctrines which subsequently proved so detrimental to the well-being of his subjects, as well as to his own. Here the young Prince was residing when he received the unexpected intelligence of the death of his grandfather. Here, at a later period, his Queen might be seen watering her exotic plants, or feeding her favourite animals in her menagerie. These glades are the same that witnessed the youthful gambols, and resounded to the merry laughter, of that promising and beautiful race of which George the Third was the sire. Within these pleasure-grounds it was that he himself had spent most of the happiest hours of his life; and, lastly, here, on a site now covered with the gayest of flower-beds, he was prostrated by ten of those dreadful weeks of insanity which visited him in the winter of 1788 and 1789.

But, though the palace which witnessed the earlier joys and sorrows of George the Third has passed away for ever, the present palatial residence is not without many interesting associations. When, many years since, the author wandered through the forsaken apartments of the old palace at Kew, he found it apparently in precisely the same condition as when George the Third had made it his summer residence, and when Queen Charlotte had expired within its walls. There were still to be seen, distinguished by their simple furniture and bed-curtains of white dimity, the different sleeping-rooms of the unmarried Princesses, with their several names inscribed over the doors of each. There were still pointed out to him the easy chair in which Queen Charlotte had breathed her last; the old harpsichord which had once belonged to Handel, and on which George the Third occasionally amused himself with playing; his walking-stick; his accustomed chair; the backgammon-board on which he used to play with his equerries;

and, lastly, the small apartment in which the pious monarch was accustomed to offer up his prayers and thanksgivings. In that apartment was formerly to be seen a relic of no small interest, the private prayer-book of George the Third. In the prayer which is used during the Session of Parliament, the King with his own hand had obliterated the words "our most religious and gracious King," and had substituted for them "a most miserable sinner."

The sons and daughters of George the Third seem, without an exception, to have taken a lively and lasting interest in the home of their childhood; a circumstance to which it is probably owing that, till the death of King William the Fourth, and the passing away of the generation to which he belonged, the interior of the old palace continued to retain so many of the distinctive features of the past. When, however, some time after the death of that monarch, the author again made a pilgrimage to the spot, (the *genius loci* had taken its flight for ever. The apartments had been stripped of their old-fashioned furniture; the walls of their pictures, and the library of its books. With the exception of Handel's harpsichord, the chair in which Queen Charlotte had expired, and some ill-painted portraits, which had been consigned to the garrets, of forgotten equerries and other royal favourites, the old edifice presented as denuded and comfortless an aspect as can well be imagined. The library alone, once a favourite apartment with George the Third, indicated, by its vacant book-shelves, the uses to which it had been formerly put. With this small apartment a trifling, yet not uninteresting story is connected. The King was one day sitting in it alone; when, the fire getting low, he summoned the page in waiting, and desired him to fetch some coals. The attendant, it seems, instead of promptly obeying the King's commands, rang the bell for the footman whose province it was to perform this menial office, and who happened to be a man advanced in years. The King's rebuke to the page was characteristic of the right-minded monarch. Desiring the attendant to conduct him to the place where the coals were kept, he took up the scuttle, and carrying it himself to the library, threw some of its contents on the fire. Then, handing the coal-scuttle to the attendant, he said—"Never ask an old man to do what you are so much better able to do yourself."

The more we look into the private life of the King, the more we regret that narrow scheme of education which unfitted him to meet, with an intelligence as clear as his conscience was fixed and firm, those great difficulties and complications of his times. He was an intense Protestant, and could never be brought to look, even for a moment, for instance, at Catholic Emancipation. He said to Eldon: "I can give up my crown, and retire from power; I can quit my palace, and live in a cottage; I can lay my head on a block, and lose my life; but I cannot break my coronation oath." He had a high sense of his responsibilities to his office; even a keen sense of honour, and often, therefore, great magnanimity. Mr. Jesse cites several instances, which we are pleased to notice, of his real piety.



When he was crowned, he would not conform to what had, we believe, been the usage, of wearing his crown while he received the Sacrament. He was, indeed, unwilling to partake of the Sacrament at all; and, many years afterwards, when the Earl of Chesterfield enquired of him whether it would be necessary for newly created knights of the garter to partake of the Sacrament in the installation, the king replied, seriously, and even severely—"No, my Lord, No! The Holy Sacrament is not to be profaned by our gothic institutions; even at my coronation, I was very unwilling to take it; but they told me it was indispensable; as it was, I took the bauble off my head before I approached the altar." His piety showed itself, among other things, in his appreciation of the Countess of Huntingdon, and the Methodists in general. Riding along one day in his carriage, he saw some disturbance; it was in the neighbourhood of one of his palaces. He drove up to enquire what it was about, and found that some Methodists were being set upon; the king spoke out loudly to the bystanders—"The Methodists are a quiet, good kind of people; they disturb nobody; if I can learn that any persons in my employment disturb them, they shall be instantly dismissed." On another occasion, we find him subscribing a thousand pounds for the relief of the Nonconformist ministers of Nova Scotia. He gave five hundred pounds towards the erection of the Lutheran Church in the Savoy; when a bishop came to him, complaining of the Dissenters, and what trouble they caused by their activity in his diocese: "Make bishops of them, my lord," he said; "make bishops of them." "But," continued the bishop, "we can't make a bishop of Lady Huntingdon!" "No," said the king, "but you can imitate her; I wish there were a Lady Huntingdon in every diocese in my kingdom." After he had seen the countess, and told her personally how highly he esteemed her zeal, he vindicated her when he heard ladies of fashion sneering at her, and said, "You have my leave to tell every one how highly I think of Lady Huntingdon."

The pious Earl of Dartmouth—the great friend of the Countess, and of Whitefield, was the only nobleman, to whom, in the letters before us, the king wrote, as a Christian man might write to another Christian man. The first efforts that were made for general education met with the warm commendations of the king; and all our readers know his earnestly expressed hope that the day would come when every poor child throughout his dominions should be able to read the Bible. We have no doubt that his knowledge and character have been very much under-rated; he took an interest in many departments of



science; and showed the interest he took, by warmly patronising those who were engaged in the pursuit. His reign presents some fine eras in the history of navigation and discovery; and he gave his hearty encouragement to the achievements of Cook and Byrom. Beneath his fostering care, the Royal Academy was founded—neither his taste nor genius were of the highest or purest; but neither, until Sir Joshua Reynolds came, was there very much of a high order of taste in art to patronise—he read extensively, and knew how to appreciate, and, when the opportunity occurred, to thank, with beautiful and amiable dignity, the men whose books were serving the cause of religion, or benefiting the minds of his people—his interviews with Dr. Beattie, the poet, and the author of the “*Essay on Truth*,” and with Dr. Johnson, are remarkable illustrations of this. He accumulated himself a magnificent library of sixty-three thousand volumes, at a personal cost of a hundred and thirty thousand pounds. When we remember who the kings were—his contemporaries, his predecessors—may we not also say, until our present beloved Sovereign assumed the sceptre—his successors, these are surely personal traits which ought to command our respect. His home life, our readers have seen pretty distinct pictures of in the pages of *Madame d’Arblay* and *Mrs. Delany*—and they will remember how simple, domestic, and homely were the quiet rooms of the inner circle, when the king could escape from the affairs of state. In politics, he was unfortunately a man of fixed ideas; nothing could move him—indeed, perhaps everywhere we find his ideas fixed, and it must be admitted that they often ran in a very narrow groove; but, in his own personal character and career, we are unable to join in a sneer at the piety of the man, because we are unable to pay homage to the policy of the king. The most serene period of his life was when first he found a real arm of strength to lean upon in *William Pitt*; and it no doubt strikes one as singular that, while the father was, on his first ascent to the throne, dismissed from his councils—the man who gave the king rest by his strength and wisdom, who was able to spread round the royal mind a little quiet, before his first great calamity of insanity came on—who was then the protector of the poor unconscious monarch and his wife from the outrages sought to be perpetrated by the Prince of Wales and his reckless party; and who did, in fact break their designs—was the son of the very man so unwisely dismissed—that amazing and precocious young statesman, who held in firmness the hand of the king, subdued the vehement and magnificent eloquence and power of *Fox*, and restored confidence to the whole nation, when its destinies

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were seen, humanly speaking, deposited in his keeping, at the age of four or five-and-twenty. As we reach, and pass by the king's fiftieth year, the story shades down into one of the most mournful, pathetic, and Lear-like histories the lives of all kings could unveil—it is “all labour and sorrow,” “labour and sorrow.” The children of this good man perplex the reader as much as children have often done in very much humbler spheres; his life had always been, so far as they had ever seen, blameless, dignified, and beautiful; and yet we suppose, more than the loss of America,—more than the complications of his ministries—more than the riots among his people,—those wild young men broke his heart. Those who have loved the Prince Regent least, will yet perhaps find some other motives for disgust, in Mr. Jesse's volumes, at the conduct of that most unroyal and heartless personage. A masculine Goneril he seems to have been. The vices of that man were not the ordinary vices of wealth and youth—human nature is frail, and such may exist with an affectionate and tender heart, capable of bleeding over the unconsciousness of one parent, and the pitiful isolation and grief of another. Nothing of this meets us here; and, so far from tenderness and sympathy, there seems every reason to believe that the Prince even intruded, with one of his wild companions, into the very apartments of the diseased monarch, rather for the purpose of turning that calamity into—we blush while we write it—a joke and a sneer. The true son of the Royal pair through this time of trial was Mr. Pitt. Mr. Jesse says :

Happily, the King and the Royal Family had a staunch and powerful champion in Mr. Pitt, who, whatever might be the consequences to himself, was resolved to guard the interests of his royal master in such a manner that, in the event of his recovering his reason, he should find his affairs as little as possible disarranged, and his kingly authority, at least, unimpaired. These objects could be attained only by restricting the powers of the Prince of Wales, in the event of his becoming Regent; and accordingly, although Pitt had everything to gain by courting the favour of the heir to the throne, and everything to lose by incurring his displeasure—although in the event of his dismissal from office he had apparently no brighter prospect before him than that of returning to his barrister's chambers and his law-books—we shall find him defending the cause of the prostrated King with all the disinterestedness and self-devotion with which, under similar circumstances, Sully would have stood by Henry the Fourth of France, or William Bentinck by William the Third of England. True it is, that the merchants and bankers of the city of London, aware of his straitened private means, and grateful to him for the services which he had rendered to commerce, had desired to make him independent of

the freaks of fortune by presenting him with the splendid gift of £100,000, but the offer had been unhesitatingly refused. "No consideration upon earth," he told his friend George Rose, "should induce him to accept it." "Does not Pitt," writes Hannah More to her sister, "fight like a hero for the poor Queen? But who will fight for *him*, for he has not a hundred a-year in the world? Like an honest old house-steward, going to be turned off, he is anxious to put everything in order, and leave the house in such condition that the next servants may do as little mischief as possible." "In the midst of all these disquieting circumstances," writes Wilberforce, "my friend is every day matter of fresh and growing admiration. I wish you were, as constantly as I am, witness to that simple and earnest regard for the public welfare by which he is so uniformly actuated. Great as I know is your attachment to him, you would love him more and more."

In fact, whatever political errors or short-comings may be attributed to the later years of Pitt, at this period he was the most commanding statesman in Europe; and he excited, even on the testimony of Walpole, no less interest in Amsterdam or Versailles than in the precincts of St. James. Lord Macaulay writes of him: "he became the greatest master of the whole art "of parliamentary government that has ever existed—a greater "than Montague, or Walpole; a greater than his father Chatham, "or his rival Fox; a greater than either of his illustrious successors, Canning or Peel."

Party spirit raged round the unconscious king—it was, in fact, now, the party of the Prince and the party of Pitt and the Queen. Mercifully for the time, in the midst of the cabals, greatly through the vigilance of Dr. Willis, the king was restored. Upon the restoration of the king, we find him reiterating to Pitt his grateful sense of his warm and steady support during his illness. The nation blazed forth in a vehement acclamation of joy; London was a blaze of light from one end to the other on the evening of the day on which the king resumed his functions; it was a spontaneous illumination, in which the poorest mechanic kindled up his farthing candle, with the gorgeous lights or the more palatial splendours of the West End. From Highgate to Tooting; from Hammersmith to Greenwich, the stream of splendour extended. This was on the tenth of March; on the twenty-third of April, the king, with all his family, went in solemn state to return thanks in St. Paul's. It was his own wish to make the thanksgiving public; but his friends, not unnaturally, doubted the wisdom of the step. But the king said to the Archbishop of Canterbury, who was among his friendly counsellors, "My Lord, I have twice "read over the evidence of the physicians on my case; if I can



"stand that, I can stand anything." It must have been an affecting and imposing procession; all the members of the House of Lords; all the members of the House of Commons; all the way, the ringing of the Church bells, broken in upon by the boom and roar of the guns from the parks and the Tower. At Temple Bar, he was of course met by the great city authorities in full state; and arrived at St. Paul's. As he entered the cathedral, between the Bishops of London and Lincoln, five thousand children burst out in grand chorus "God save the King!" This was almost too much; he covered his face with his handkerchief, burst into tears, and said to the Bishop of London "I do feel now that I have been very ill." The joy of the nation was quite unaffected—George the Third had not been wanting in the love of his people; but he had never been what we should call a popular monarch—his troublesome times, and pre-eminently stupid ministers, to whom insanity was not the accident, but the nature of their being—prevented his great popularity. But, no doubt, the turbulence of joy arose from the fact that the recovery of the king was regarded, by all orders and conditions of men, as not less than salvation from the dreaded possibility, either of the protracted regency, or premature reign of the dissolute and abandoned son. Can it be believed that, while the Queen and the nation were rejoicing, and while the amiable king was relieving himself by tears of gratitude in St. Paul's, the behaviour of the Prince of Wales, his immediate brothers, and companions, was so indecent as to excite the remarks of the spectators. The restoration of the Sovereign was, no doubt, to the Prince and his parasites, a circumstance immensely exciting their chagrin. The Prince's behaviour was simply disgraceful; and immediately after this period of joy, Lord Bulkeley speaks of the king's heart being torn to pieces by his sons. Of the Duke of York and his behaviour, the king exclaimed, "It kills me, it goes to my soul; I don't know how to bear it!"

More pleasant, perhaps, than even the great days in London, on account of the restoration, were those when, by the advice of his physicians, the King set forth, with only the Queen, and his more immediate and affectionate children and servants, for a long tour, by short stages, to the West of England. But as it was known he was passing along in this simple way, the whole line of road was relieved by triumphal arches, laurels, flowers, and bands of music, and rural fêtes—girls with chaplets, fair young creatures strewing the entrances of the villages with flowers. Miss Burney was one of the party, as the companion of the Queen. In the New Forest, they were treated with quite a

sylvan entertainment—they rested in Charles the Second's old hunting-box; and were guarded by bowmen and archers in sylvan costume. Artless and disinterested rejoicings met him everywhere—the bands of music were sometimes tolerably discordant, the crowds sometimes troublesome—but all was so simple, loyal and affectionate; unlike anything that could be produced now, that the King and all the party were comforted and pleased. In every little village where they happened to be spending the Sunday, the King unostentatiously walked arm-in-arm with the Queen and his daughters to the nearest village church. Sometimes, on board ship, at Weymouth; sometimes in the hay-fields, chatting with the mowers, drenched to the skin in an open boat in Portland Roads—all looks very simple, happy, and romantic. Humorous incidents also broke in, like that untoward event at Weymouth, when the mayor had the honour of kissing hands, but seemed to forget his manners, in that he did not kneel. "You must kneel," said Colonel Gwynne; "I can't," he said. "You must." "*I can't.*" The kissing was got over, however—the Colonel said, "You ought to have knelt." "I can *not*," said the perturbed functionary. "Every body else can kneel," said the Colonel, no doubt suspecting some latent disloyalty. "Yes," said the mayor, "but, don't you see, I've got a wooden leg?"

Weymouth was a favourite place with George the Third; and there are old men and women still living who remember the simple, affable life of the King, and the pleasure with which he seemed to escape from the noise of the greater court to the quiet of that pleasant little town. But, at the period to which we have conducted him, the King was as yet, compared with the life he was to attain, a young man—fifty looks young when compared with eighty-one—and his darkest days were yet in store; his mind was not, for a long time, seriously shaken from its balance—but, when the agitation for Catholic Emancipation commenced, the invariable penalty of rigidly fixed ideas was paid by the King in exceeding nervous agitation—he could not conceive faithfulness to the Church, to his coronation oath, and to Protestantism, compatible with any relief for opinions which seemed to him disastrous to the well-being of the country.

Our paper has been so much longer than we had intended, that we must refer our readers to Mr. Jesse's volumes for copious and interesting details of the great transactions of war and peace—of the successive emergence of new and influential ministers in the cabinet—of all those continued unhappinesses in the King's family, especially the debts of the Prince of Wales; his marriage with Mrs. Fitzherbert, of which we apprehend

there can be little doubt; his marvellous denial of it in the House of Commons, through his close friend, Fox, who resented deeply the indignity which had been put upon his eminent name. All these, and many other such matters, we must leave. The threats of invasion, when the whole chivalry of England seemed to stir itself to repel the insult offered by the French Emperor. It was his lot to see all the strong men in whom he trusted, the chiefest among his strong foes too, smitten down—Nelson shattered the French fleet at Trafalgar, and died; Pitt died; Fox died; then blindness came on the old King—at seventy-two, he lost his most beloved child, the Princess Amelia. The blind King walked to the room of his dying child—she placed on one of his fingers a ring made from a lock of her hair, and the inscription “Remember me.” He bent over his child for the last time, and she whispered her last words, “Remember me, but do not grieve for me.” It was too much; reason began to flutter through the disturbed and agitated words of the bereaved old man, before she took her final flight—there can be no doubt, we think, that his heart broke over that last grief. He anticipated his own mental aberration, and was heard soliloquising by himself, “This was caused by poor Amelia.” Yet he was able to give directions for her funeral; and he selected for her burial anthem, “Thou shalt shew me the path of life. In Thy presence is fulness of joy, at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.” Then he superintended the distribution of her donations and legacies, and these were about the last sane things to which he attended on earth. “He reaped not in this world,” says Sir Walter Scott, “the reward of his firmness, his virtue, his enduring patriotism; but was stricken with mental alienation, while he wept broken-hearted over the bed of a beloved and amiable daughter.” This was in 1810—the greater part of the remaining years of his life were passed in the night of mind,—the night of eye-sight too—eight of those years in an entireness of darkness. Yet, what shall we say? Sometimes it would seem as if communions and sympathies gave to him glimpses of more peace and happiness than he could have known had the mind and all its senses been awake. Sometimes there seemed to be a keen sense of the afflictions which hung upon him. Once, he was heard repeating to himself the mournful lines Milton has placed in the mouth of Samson Agonistes:—

Oh, dark, dark, dark! Amid the blaze of noon  
Irrecoverably dark! Total eclipse  
Without all hope of day!  
Oh! first erected beam! And thou, great word,



"Let there be light!" "and light was over all,"  
Why am I thus bereaved thy prime decree?

Sometimes, in morbid seasons, this semi-consciousness was upon him; he arranged music for concerts; he always selected from his favourite composer, Handel; and it was remarkable that he selected such passages as the representation of madness caused by love, from Samson; and the lamentation of Jephthah at the loss of his daughter. On the twenty-first of May, 1811, for the last time, he appeared outside the walls of Windsor Castle; henceforth his people saw him no more; yet, even through his illness, religion shed strong consolations through his mind; and, although lost to the present, and unable to relate any passing events together, he lived much and happily in the past. He seldom imagined himself to be suffering from mental distress; but, on the contrary, believed himself to be often conversing with angels. His beard became white, long, venerable, and flowing; he was a master on the flute, and on the violin; and, by these, the old man was able to call a strange spiritual companionship around him. Sometimes real intervals of consciousness came; and once, in 1814, the queen was apprised of his apparent sane conversibleness. Some sudden shaft of music had called the slumbering, or scattered senses into coherency for a few fleeting seconds; he fell on his knees, and prayed earnestly—first, for his queen; then for his children; then for his nation; and then for patience and resignation to bear the divine will. Thus, however, in mental and visual darkness, the poor old solitary king was not so dark, nor his lot perhaps so dreadful, as it seems to us. We are not sure that any page of history or biography tells a more pathetic tale. Poor, crownless monarch; his long, silvery hair; his sightless eye-balls; the star of the Order of the Garter gleaming on his breast, as he walked to and fro, seeming to be mocked by those dreamy soliloquies and conversations he imagined himself holding with departed statesmen, as he paced the long gallery—all the time, never forgetting that he was a king. Then he became deaf. Where, and what was that mind? Battles were won and lost; peace commemorated, with festive illuminations—he knew it not! His sister died; his beloved grand-daughter, Charlotte, and her infant died—he knew it not! His beloved queen died; the Duke of Kent, his son, died—he knew nothing of all! Marriages and funerals; the funeral plume and the festive light were all unknown to him! As Mr. Jesse touchingly says, "the meanest bird that flitted past his palace windows, was more sufficient for itself than he." The seasons came and went;

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the sun and the moon waxed and waned ; the snow fell ; the storm raged ; the lightning flashed—to that august old king's vacant mind and vacant eye, all was nothingness ! From those brief seconds when the queen surprised him, and shared with him his tears and prayers, he never woke to reason again—until that hour, twelve o'clock, on the night of the 29th of January, 1820—when the great bell of St. Paul's announced to the nation that the venerable sufferer had come to himself, and gone to his Father ; exchanging his phantom majesty for what he surely received, if any king ever received, an incorruptible crown.

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II.

ANNALS OF A QUIET NEIGHBOURHOOD.\*

THESE are volumes to which little exception can be taken, and heartiest admiration may be given. No reader acquainted with Mr. MacDonald's previous works, will doubt that this is his most sustained and best. We remember some scenes in *Alec Forbes*, and *David Elginbrod*, which we think no single passages in this work transcend, or perhaps even equal ; but as little can we doubt that Mr. MacDonald is one of the few writers whose works, and this especially, exhibit an advance of knowledge, art, and genuine power. There is an exhibition of growing ease in the use of his materials ; far less evidence of strain and disjointedness ; apparently a deeper acquaintance with the motives and springs of character—especially we are glad to see a more kindly and thoroughly healthful spirit pervading the whole.

To the previous novels, to which we have referred, we took exception on the score of sectarianism ; we thought they were characterised by a hard bitterness which we almost appropriated as a personal injustice to ourselves ; if that were the case, certainly all traces of it have been clean washed away in these reminiscences of the Vicar. His theology, too—for Mr. MacDonald will use his fiction as a vehicle for the utterance of his religious faith—is no longer angry. We have no unkind things

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\* *Annals of a Quiet Neighbourhood.* By George MacDonald, M.A. Three Volumes. Hurst and Blackett.

about Calvinists or Evangelicals. We suspect the writer would have very little faith in any scheme of Christian dogmatics, perhaps would scarcely agree with us in maintaining that such a scheme there assuredly must be, or ought to be; but, as is fitting in a Vicar, religion covers and pervades his whole book, and it is healthful, softening, and elevating.

As a work of art, we have already said, we regard it as Mr. MacDonald's best painting; he confines himself to his "*Quiet Neighbourhood*;" and, for the most part, excepting in the last chapter—to the first months—at any rate, scarcely years, of the Vicar's experience in his parish. A fine, quick, sad, perceiving, poet's eye, takes in the points of rural scenery; and, in a very remarkable manner often, makes their storms and calms, and glooms, and glories, to be the interpreters and representatives of the mood and will, or varying experience of souls. For the neighbourhood, it is apparently, as the writer designates it, quiet enough—so are most neighbourhoods usually; but hearts make storms—in the human life is the unquietness which disturbs; and the vicar has tragic reminiscences and experiences in his own life, which seem only to stop short of tragedy, while they hold the reader sufficiently in the sense of suspense, wonder, and fear.

We are always too generous to our readers to give outlines of the fictions we introduce to them; it is enough that we indicate characteristics. Perhaps we should call Mr. MacDonald neither metaphysician, nor mystic, in the excessive sense of such terms—but to be a poet includes both; and, whoever writes well and highly of human nature, will rise out of sense and mere routine fact, into the higher conditions and free forms of things; and will survey life and circumstance from within, turning them inside out, stripping off that husk and shell which is, to ordinary minds, the only knowledge and fact. Hence, as we think we have seen remarked of these volumes—read, they will not be done with; they will be put on the shelf—not to be got rid of, but to be taken down; by their aphorisms, by their kindly insight into life, by their wise recipes for the management of troubled hearts, by their genial glow of wide, human sympathy and affectionateness, by their refreshing pictures of rural scenes—to give diversion to the mind, from weariness, unfaithfulness, and despondency; and to show apparently how steadily, to this writer's mind, shines out the assurance of what life may be, in its hope and endurance; and what it will be in its fruition and end:

We will not say that there are not things in the volumes which strike us as clumsy. The story of Tom Weir's discharge from the draper's shop in London, our writer surely knows, is

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but a plain rendering of a simple fact which, some two or three years since, went the round of our religious periodicals. We believe the circumstances, in the main, happened exactly as they are described in the pages before us—surely it must have been simply indolence which prevented our writer from inventing his own circumstance, for the purpose of illustrating his own story. Perhaps, too, we may feel that the Vicar has a little broken his spell by the last chapter. The story of his “Annals” closes before “Tom’s Story;” and, as we are glad to see that the Vicar intends to work the vein of his reminiscences again; this, if it were necessary to tell it at all, might have been reserved for that second succession of “Annals.” We shall be well pleased to hear more about old Rogers; we should think old Weir, who was able to make us shiver while telling that tragic business of “the Bishop’s Basin,” must have had something else of the same kind stored away in his memory; and, although Mr. MacDonald maintains that the dying old man’s fancies of a man coming into the weird old room, and kneeling down, and searching and rummaging in the old cupboard, was mere fancy and nothing more; we very much doubt it. We hope something came out of that; and that this future range of experiences will give up the secret of the old cupboard.

Most of the characteristics to which we have referred will strike the reader in the first volume. That volume might almost stand alone; the story does not begin; the Vicar writes like a poet, or a spectator; or, in a word, like the Vicar. He is a gem of a Vicar, this; we never met with the like of him; but we are quite free to hope that he may have his counterpart, or something like it, in many of the villages of England.

The volumes abound with passages and scenes of the truest pathos; indeed, this is the pervading spirit of the book; the mingling of storm and calm in the death-bed of Catherine Weir; and the equally, painfully powerful death-bed scene of poor old Dame Tomkins—which, in its hard, tearful reality, is like one of Faed’s paintings. The Vicar had promised the poor old pauper creature that he would come to her at any hour, day, or night, when it was thought she was dying. She thought—although, as she said, “summut skeer’d” at the idea of dying—“if I had a hold on you i’ the one hand, and my man there i’ the other, I could go comfortable.” So, when the time came, and a wretched time it was, for the village was flooded, and the Vicar’s heart was wrung with its own personal and unrevealed anguish, he hastened to the wretched hut to which the flood had penetrated, even extinguishing the poor low fire by which old Tomkins sat crying, while his old wife was departing.



I resumed my seat by the bedside, where the old woman was again moaning. As soon as I took her hand she ceased, and so I sat till it began to grow dark.

"Are you there, Sir?" she would murmur.

"Yes, I am here. I have a hold of your hand."

"I can't feel you, Sir."

"But you can hear me. And you can hear God's voice in your heart. I am here, though you can't feel me. And God is here, though you can't see Him."

She would be silent for a while, and then murmur again—

"Are you there, Tomkins?"

"Yes, my woman, I'm here," answered the old man to one of these questions; "but I wish I was there instead, wheresomever it be as you're goin', old girl."

And all that I could hear of her answer was, "Bym-by; bym-by."

Why should I linger over the death-bed of an illiterate woman, old and plain, dying away by inches? Is it only that she died with a hold of my hand, and that therefore I am interested in the story? I trust not. I was interested in *her*. Why? Would my readers be more interested if I told them of the death of a young lovely creature, who said touching things, and died amidst a circle of friends, who felt that the very light of life was being taken away from them? It was enough for me that here was a woman with a heart like my own; who needed the same salvation I needed; to whom the love of God was the one blessed thing; who was passing through the same dark passage into the light that the Lord had passed through before her, that I had to pass through after her. She had no theories—at least, she gave utterance to none; she had few thoughts of her own—and gave still fewer of them expression; you might guess at a true notion in her mind, but an abstract idea she could scarcely lay hold of; her speech was very common; her manner rather *brusque* than gentle; but she could love; she could forget herself; she could be sorry for what she did or thought wrong; she could hope; she could wish to be better; she could admire good people; she could trust in God her Saviour. And now the loving God-made human heart in her was going into a new school, that it might begin a fresh beautiful growth. She was old, I have said, and plain; but now her old age and plainness were about to vanish, and all that had made her youth attractive to young Tomkins was about to return to her, only rendered tenfold more beautiful by the growth of fifty years of learning according to her ability.

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Therefore, even the dull approaches of death are full of deep significance and warm interest to one who loves his fellows, who desires not to be distinguished by any better fate than theirs; and shrinks from the pride of supposing that his own death, or that of the noblest of the good, is more precious in the sight of God than that of "one of the least of these little ones."

At length, after a long silence, the peculiar sounds of obstructed breathing indicated the end at hand. The jaw fell, and the eyes were

fixed. The old man closed the mouth and the eyes of his old companion, weeping like a child; and I prayed aloud, giving thanks to God for taking her to Himself. It went to my heart to leave the old man alone with the dead; but it was better to let him be alone for a while, ere the women should come to do the last offices for the abandoned form.

I went to Old Rogers, told him the state in which I had left poor Tomkins, and asked him what was to be done.

"I'll go and bring him home, Sir, directly. He can't be left there."

"But how can you bring him in such a night?"

"Let me see, Sir. I must think. Would your mare go in a cart, do you think?"

"Quite quietly. She brought a load of gravel from the common a few days ago. But where's your cart? I haven't got one."

"There's one at Weir's to be repaired, Sir. It wouldn't be stealing to borrow it."

How he managed with Tomkins I do not know. I thought it better to leave all the rest to him. He only said afterwards, that he could hardly get the old man away from the body. But when I went in next day, I found Tomkins sitting, disconsolate, but as comfortable as he could be, in the easy chair by the side of the fire. Mrs. Rogers was bustling about cheerily. The storm had died in the night. The sun was shining. It was the first of the spring weather. The whole country was gleaming with water. But soon it would sink away, and the grass be the thicker for its rising.

We assure our readers that this is an example that we most of us might profit a good bit by studying. It is a hard matter to believe that anybody ever was so wise and ideal, so altogether up to the mark in most of his interviews with his parishioners. A man, we suppose, like a Vicar, with every house open to him, in a wide, wandering neighbourhood, may find, not only innumerable households to which he may carry the coarse, but still very comfortable comforts of bread, coals, and blankets; but others, where the strife of life is saddened by the want of the bread of life; and, in most instances, vicars, or others, who seek to break it there, simply shed the crumbs on the floor, while the rest lies untasted and untouched on the work-bench or the table, because the visitor did not know how to offer it.

We think the chief value of these volumes will be the teaching of some such wise methods of mental and spiritual sympathy and communion. Whether the Vicar ever made any impression on Mrs. Oldeastle; and how far Sarah, "the white wolf," would have profited by his patience and penetration of spiritual states, there is nothing in these volumes to show us; but the painful stories of the resentment of Thomas Weir, and his daughter Catherine Weir, while they shed a marvellousness over Mr. MacDonald's pages, are, we suppose, not so extraordinary—but

their likeness in mental misery, in isolated human loneliness, might be found within a few streets or houses of us anywhere. We dare say it is true that, usually, what we call doing good in this way, is the putting our own notions whole and unexamined into the minds of people—too often magnifying thus our sense of self, beneath the idea of doing good to our neighbour, rather than seeking to set the mind and heart free from their unrest and unbelief. The Vicar well says :—

It is a principle of mine never to push anything over the edge. When I am successful in any argument, my one dread is of humiliating my opponent. Indeed, I cannot bear it. It humiliates me. And if you want him to think about anything, you must leave him room, and not give him such associations with the question that the very idea of it will be painful and irritating to him. Let him have a hand in the convincing of himself. I have been surprised sometimes to see my own arguments come up fresh and green, when I thought the fowls of the air had devoured them up. When a man reasons for victory and not for the truth in the other soul, he is sure of just one ally, the same that Faust had in fighting Gretchen's brother—that is, the Devil. But God and good men are against him. So I never follow up a victory of that kind ; for, as I said, the defeat of the intellect is not the object in fighting with the sword of the Spirit ; but the acceptance of the heart. In this case, therefore, I drew back.

The unselfish manner in which the Vicar went to work with the lives and minds committed to his charge is, therefore, we say, exemplary ; he had the patience to permit his ideas time to germinate ; he was desirous that they should be received really, that they might be a source of new life and happiness to the pained and agonised. Most novels seem to run two stories side by side ; and, with the experience of the Vicar, and his dealings with his parishioners, runs the story of the Oldcastle family. We seem to be in two worlds ; in his village, among the poor of his flock, the Vicar is quiet, passive, full of the wisdom which guides, and is equal to the circumstances and conditions around him. As he is drawn into the neighbourhood of the Oldcastle family, he seems to be himself inoculated with its wild moods and tempests, caught up in the roar of the storms among its trees, the passions in its household. We suppose, to many readers, this will not be the least interesting part of the book ; we prefer ourselves those quiet—which are also, always the most suggestive, moods. It is in such times that his pen flows most in the vein of intelligence, thoughtfulness, and love. As has been our wont, we may quote a few of these bright, sententious sentences :—



## IN THE PULPIT AND OUT.

"You, see, Sir, on the bridge here, the parson is the parson like, and I'm old Rogers; and I looks in his face, and he looks in mine, and I says to myself, 'This is my parson.' But o' Sundays he's nobody's parson: he's got his work to do, and it mun be done, and there's an end on't."

That there was a real idea in the old man's mind was considerably clearer than the logic by which he tried to bring it out.

"Did you know parson that's gone, Sir?" he went on.

"No," I answered.

"Oh, Sir! he wur a good parson. Many's the time he come and sit at my son's bedside—him that's dead and gone, Sir—for a long hour, on a Saturday night, too. And then when I see him up in the desk the next mornin', I'd say to myself, 'Old Rogers, that's the same man as sat by your son's bedside last night. Think o' that, old Rogers!' But, somehow, I never did feel right sure o' that same. He didn't seem to have the same cut, somehow; and he didn't talk a bit the same. And when he spoke to me after sermon, in the churchyard, I was always of a mind to go into the church again and look up to the pulpit to see if he war really out ov it: for this warn't the same man, you see. But you'll know all about it, better than I can tell you, Sir. Only I always likes parson better out o' the pulpit, and that's how I come to want to make you look at me, Sir, instead o' the water down there, afore I see you in the church to-morrow mornin'."

## AN OLD SAILOR'S IDEA ABOUT A PARSON.

"And, besides, Sir, I'm an old salt,—an old man-o'-war's man,—and I've been all round the world, Sir; and I ha' been in all sorts o' company, pirates and all, Sir; and I aint a bit frightened of a parson. No; I love a parson, Sir. And I'll tell you for why, Sir. He's got a good telescope, and he gets to the masthead, and he looks out. And he sings out, 'Land ahead!' or 'Breakers ahead!' and gives directions accordin'. Only I can't always make out what he says. But when he shuts up his spyglass, and comes down the riggin' and talks to us like one man to another, then I don't know what I should do without the parson. Good evenin' to you, Sir, and welcome to Marshmallows."

## A COFFIN. FIVE MINUTES IN A CARPENTER'S SHOP.

And the feeling has grown upon me, till now it seems at times as if the only cure in the world for social pride would be to go for five silent minutes into a carpenter's shop. How one can think of himself as above his neighbours, within sight, sound, or smell of one, I fear I am getting almost unable to imagine; and one ought not to get out of sympathy with the wrong. Only as I am growing old now, it does not matter so much, for I daresay my time will not be very long.

## DOUBTING.

A man may be on the way to the truth just in virtue of his doubting.

I will tell you what Lord Bacon says, and of all writers of English I delight in him: "So it is in contemplation: if a man will begin with certainties, he shall end in doubts; but if he will be content to begin with doubts, he shall end in certainties."

#### THE COLD SHOULDER.

The instrument commonly called *the cold shoulder*. It is a wicked instrument that, and ought to have fallen out of use by this time.

#### A SNEER.

I declare to you I think a sneer the worst thing God has not made.

#### MRS. OLDCASTLE.

She certainly was neither safe nor wholesome. \* \* \* \* \*  
From that most hurtful of all beings under the sun, an unwomanly woman.

#### OLD AGE.

Age is such a different thing in different natures! One man seems to grow more and more selfish as he grows older; and in another, the slow fire of time seems only to consume, with fine, imperceptible gradations, the yet lingering selfishness in him, letting the light of the kingdom, which the Lord says is within, shine out more and more, as the husk grows thin and is ready to fall off, that the man, like the seed sown, may pierce the earth of this world and rise into the pure air and wind and dew of the second life. The face of a loving old man is always to me like a morning moon, reflecting the yet unrisen sun of the other world, yet fading before its approaching light, until, when it does rise, it pales and withers away from our gaze, absorbed in the source of its own beauty. This old man, you may see, took my fancy wonderfully; for, even at this distance of time, when I am old myself, the recollection of his beautiful old face makes me feel as if I could write poetry about him.

#### THE GOSPELS AND THE EPISTLES.

During the suffering which accompanied the disappointment at which I have already hinted, I did not think it inconsistent with the manly spirit in which I was resolved to endure it, to seek consolation from such a source as the New Testament—if mayhap consolation for such a trouble was to be found there. Whereupon, a little to my surprise, I discovered that I could not read the Epistles at all. For I did not then care an atom for the theological discussions in which I had been interested before, and for the sake of which I had read those Epistles. Now that I was in trouble, what to me was that philosophical theology staring me in the face from out the sacred page? Ah! reader, do not misunderstand me. All reading of the Book is not reading of the Word. And many that are first shall be last and the last first. I know *now* that it was Jesus Christ and not theology that filled the hearts of the men that wrote those epistles—Jesus Christ, the living,

loving God-Man, whom I found—not in the Epistles, but in the Gospels. The Gospels contain what the apostles preached—the Epistles what they wrote after the preaching. And until we understand the Gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ our brother-king—until we understand Him, until we have His Spirit, promised so freely to them that ask it—all the Epistles, the words of men who were full of Him, and wrote out of that fulness, who loved Him so utterly that by that very love they were lifted into the air of pure reason and right, and would die for Him, and did die for Him, without two thoughts about it, in the very simplicity of *no choice*—the Letters, I say, of such men are to us a sealed book. Until we love the Lord so as to do what He tells us, we have no right to have an opinion about what one of those men meant; for all they wrote is about things beyond us. The simplest woman who tries not to judge her neighbour, or not to be anxious for the morrow, will better know what is best to know, than the best-read bishop without that one simple outgoing of his highest nature in the effort to do the will of Him who thus spoke.

#### ARGUMENT.

In fact, an argument, however simply conducted and honourable, must just resemble a game at football; the unfortunate question being the ball, and the numerous and sometimes conflicting thoughts which arise in each mind forming the two parties whose energies are spent in a succession of kicks. In fact, I don't like argument, and I don't care for the victory.

#### THE SPIRITUAL APPETITE AND ITS FOOD.

"Suppose," I said, "that nobody has found the truth, is that sufficient ground for saying that nobody ever will find it? or that there is no such thing as truth to be found? Are the ages so nearly done that no chance yet remains? Surely if God has made us to desire the truth, He has got some truth to cast into the gulf of that desire. Shall God create hunger and no food? But possibly a man may be looking the wrong way for it. You may be using the microscope, when you ought to open both eyes and lift up your head. Or a man may be finding some truth which is feeding his soul, when he does not think he is finding any. You know the *Fairy Queen*. Think how long the Redeross Knight travelled with the Lady Truth—Una, you know—without learning to believe in her; and how much longer still without ever seeing her face. For my part, may God give me strength to follow till I die. Only I will venture to say this, that it is not by any agony of the intellect that I expect to discover her."

#### HONOUR AND INSULT.

Honour demanded is as worthless as insult undeserved is hurtless!

#### THAT VICARS SHOULD STUDY THE COMFORT OF THEIR CONGREGATIONS.

I was very particular in having the church well warmed before Sunday. I think some persons must neglect seeing after this matter



on principle, because warmth may make a weary creature go to sleep here and there about the place: as if any healing doctrine could enter the soul while it is on the rack of the frost. The clergy should see—for it is their business—that their people have no occasion to think of their bodies at all while they are in church. They have enough ado to think of the truth. When our Lord was feeding even their bodies, He made them all sit down on the grass. It is worth noticing that there was much grass in the place—a rare thing I should think in those countries—and therefore, perhaps, it was chosen by Him for their comfort in feeding their souls and bodies both. If I may judge from experiences of my own, one of the reasons why some churches are of all places the least likely for anything good to be found in, is, that they are as wretchedly cold to the body as they are to the soul—too cold every way for anything to grow in them. *Edelweiss*, “Noblewhite”—as they call a plant growing under the snow on some of the Alps—could not survive the winter in such churches. There is small welcome in a cold house. And the clergyman, who is the steward, should look to it. It is for him to give his Master's friends a welcome to his Master's house—for the welcome of a servant is precious, and now-a-days very rare.

The readers of Mr. MacDonald's previous volumes will expect in his pages some of his illuminating lines of verse; there are not so many as in other volumes, but those we find are sweet and fresh, as new-born poetry should be. The following little carol, sung by Jane Rogers at the Vicar's Christmas party, in the old barn, is apt to the season:—

Babe Jesus lay on Mary's lap;  
The sun shone in his hair;  
And so it was she saw, mayhap,  
The crown already there.

For she sang; “Sleep on, my little King!  
Bad Herod dares not come;  
Before Thee, sleeping, holy thing,  
Wild winds would soon be dumb.

“I kiss Thy hands, I kiss Thy feet,  
My King, so long desired;  
Thy hands shall never be soil'd, my sweet;  
Thy feet shall never be tired.

“For Thou art the King of Men, my son;  
Thy crown I see it plain;  
And men shall worship Thee, every one,  
And cry, Glory! Amen!”

Baby Jesus open'd his eyes so wide!  
At Mary look'd her Lord.  
And Mary stinted her song and sigh'd.  
Babe Jesus said never a word.

The following little prayer for grace, has the sweetness and conceit we find in some of the old poets; it is the Vicar's versification of his sermon, in that season when he tells us the devil was in the Vicar; it will be good if Satan always comes to so dry a place:—

Had I the grace to win the grace  
Of some old man complete in lore,  
My face would worship at his face,  
Like childhood seated on the floor.

Had I the grace to win the grace  
Of childhood, loving, shy, apart,  
The child should find a nearer place,  
And teach me, resting on my heart.

Had I the grace to win the grace  
Of maiden living all above,  
My soul would trample down the base,  
That she might have a man to love.

A grace I have no grace to win  
Knocks now at my half-open door:  
Ah, Lord of glory, come thou in,  
Thy grace divine is all and more.

We think we must have given to our readers the impression that here is a book that will do more for them than cheat the passing hour out of its monotony and weariness. Its playing lights of romance and tragedy will come out best to the reader's apprehension, as he turns to the volumes for himself; as indeed it must be with the whole of a book which professes to be a work to reveal the art of life; that is, the control of outer, exterior, circumstances, by an inner power of principle and motive. The writer is at home among the moods of nature, when her sunshine rests upon the trees of the old park, or gilds the weather-vane of his old church; or when, on the wild moor, at midnight, amidst the beat and tramp of storms, he goes out, hurried along by the impatient restlessness in himself, to find another, yet more cruelly rent and tossed by the winds and tempests of human passions—a lulling quiet, like that which soothed the Vicar's spirit when, on Saturday afternoons, he turned his whole church into a study, and went to sit in the deepening twilight, that he might think out his sermons for to-morrow among the tombs and corbels, the pillars and the vaulted roof, of the old, age-worn building.

This fine old church in which I was honoured to lead the prayers of my people, was not the expression of the religious feeling of my time.

There was a gloom about it—a sacred gloom, I know, and I loved it; but such gloom as was not in my feeling when I talked to my flock. I honoured the place; I rejoiced in its history; I delighted to think that even by the temples made with hands outlasting these bodies of ours, we were in a sense united to those who in them had before us lifted up holy hands without wrath or doubting; and with many more who, like us, had lifted up at least prayerful hands, without hatred or despair. The place soothed me, tuned me to a solemn mood—one of self-denial, and gentle gladness in all sober things. \* \* \* \* For I always found the open air the most genial influence upon me for the production of religious feeling and thought. I had been led to try whether it might not be so with me by the fact that our Lord seemed so much to delight in the open air, and late in the day as well as early in the morning would climb the mountain to be alone with His Father. I found that it helped to give a reality to everything that I thought about, if I only contemplated it under the high untroubled blue, with the lowly green beneath my feet, and the wind blowing on me to remind me of the Spirit that once moved on the face of the waters, bringing order out of disorder, and light out of darkness, and was now seeking every day a fuller entrance into my heart, that there He might work the one will of the Father in heaven.

My reader will see then that there was, as it were, not so much a discord, as a lack of harmony between the surroundings wherein my thoughts took form; or, to use a homelier phrase, my sermon was studied, and the surroundings wherein I had to put these forms into the garments of words, or preach that sermon. I therefore sought to bridge over this difference (if I understood music, I am sure I could find an expression exactly fitted to my meaning),—to find an easy passage between the open-air mood and the church mood, so as to be able to bring into the church as much of the fresh air, and the tree-music, and the colour-harmony, and the gladness over all, as might be possible; and, in order to this, I thought all my sermon over again in the afternoon sun, as it shone slantingly through the stained window over Lord Eagle's tomb, and in the failing light thereafter and the gathering dusk of the twilight, pacing up and down the solemn old place, hanging my thoughts here on a crocket, there on a corbel; now on the gable-point over which Weir's face would gaze next morning, and now on the aspiring peaks of the organ. I thus made the place a cell of thought and prayer. And when the next day came, I found the forms around me so interwoven with the forms of my thought, that I felt almost like one of the old monks who had built the place, so little did I find any check to my thought or utterance from its unfitness for the expression of my individual modernism. But not one atom the more did I incline to the evil fancy that God was more in the past than in the present; that He is more within the walls of the church, than in the unwall'd sky and earth; or seek to turn backwards one step from a living Now to an entombed and consecrated Past.

One lovely Saturday, I had been out all the morning. I had not walked far, for I had sat in the various places longer than I had walked,



my path lying through fields and copses, crossing a country road only now and then. I had my Greek Testament with me, and I read when I sat, and thought when I walked. I remember well enough that I was going to preach about the cloud of witnesses, and explain to my people that this did not mean persons looking at, witnessing our behaviour—not so could any addition be made to the awfulness of the fact that the eye of God was upon us—but witnesses to the truth, people who did what God wanted them to do, come of it what might, whether a crown or a rack, scoffs or applause; to behold whose witnessing might well rouse all that was human and divine in us to choose our part with them and their Lord. When I came home, I had an early dinner, and then betook myself to my Saturday's resort. I had never had a room large enough to satisfy me before. Now my study was to my mind.

All through the slowly-fading afternoon, the autumn of the day, when the colours are richest and the shadows long and lengthening, I paced my solemn old-thoughted church. Sometimes I went up into the pulpit and sat there, looking on the ancient walls which had grown up under men's hands that men might be helped to pray by the visible symbol of unity which the walls gave, and that the voice of the Spirit of God might be heard exhorting men to forsake the evil and choose the good. And I thought how many witnesses to the truth had knelt in those ancient pews. For, as the great church is made up of numberless communities, so is the great shining orb of witness-bearers made up of millions of lesser orbs. All men and women of true heart bear individual testimony to the truth of God, saying, "I have trusted and found Him faithful." And the feeble light of the glowworm is yet light, pure, and good, and with a loveliness of its own. "So, O Lord," I said, "let my light shine before men." And I felt no fear of vanity in such a prayer, for I knew that the glory to come of it is to God only—"that men may glorify their Father in heaven." And I knew that when we seek glory for ourselves, the light goes out, and the Horror that dwells in darkness breathes cold upon our spirits. And I remember that just as I thought thus, my eye was caught first by a yellow light that gilded the apex of the font-cover, which had been wrought like a flame or a bursting blossom: it was so old and worn, I never could tell which; and then by a red light all over a white marble tablet in the wall—the red of life on the cold hue of the grave. And this red light did not come from any work of man's device, but from the great window of the west, which little Gerard Weir wanted to help God to paint. I must have been in a happy mood that Saturday afternoon, for everything pleased me and made me happier; and all the church-forms about me blended and harmonised graciously with the throne and footstool of God which I saw through the windows. And I lingered on till the night had come; till the church only gloomed about me, and had no shine; and then I found my spirit burning up the clearer, as a lamp which has been flaming all the day with light unseen becomes a glory in the room when the sun is gone down.

This long extract conveys to the reader the picture of the

soothing quiet of the book. The eye which carries, by the soul within, the meditative stillness to scenes—or, as when we first make the Vicar's acquaintance, as he goes for his walk on the Saturday evening, after his first arrival in his parish, and stands by the river-side, on the bridge, the banks bordered with pollards.

Now pollards always made me miserable. In the first place, they look ill-used; in the next place, they look tame; in the third place, they look very ugly. I had not learned then to honour them, on the ground that they yield not a jot to the adversity of their circumstances; that, if they must be pollards, they still will be trees; and what they may not do with grace, they will yet do with bounty; that, in short, their life bursts forth, despite of all that is done to repress and destroy their individuality. When you have once learned to honour anything, love is not very far off; at least that has always been my experience. But, as I have said, I had not yet learned to honour pollards, and therefore they made me more miserable than I was already.

But this is not the only spirit of the book; there are chapters which do anything but sooth; they stir the curiosity, keep wonder and passion on the stretch, and show how the quietest neighbourhood may have, not only storms in its heavens and among its trees, but how the uncircumstantial lives of humble villagers may be roused into living interest, by those which are, after all, the only real and abiding circumstances—the transactions of the human heart. But we hand the book over to our readers; we have not allowed ourselves to enquire, in the midst of our high appreciation of them, whether Mr. MacDonald does not regard life from too exclusively an ideal point of view; whether he have a sufficiently robust estimate of human nature; it will strike some readers as a fault, certainly, that all his characters are characters idealised and refined, either in their good or their ill—this, also, has been very much the character of the men and women of his previous volumes. He would, no doubt, reply to us, “and so it ought to be;” but there is a realism for the most ideal painting; and Mr. MacDonald's characters often hover like fantastic Christabels and Geraldines—how especially this is the case with Mrs. and Miss Oldcastle; and Judy is more like a dancing fairy than a child. As the ideal melts the characters into a beautiful, and we will not say indistinct, but distant and inhuman haziness, so Mr. MacDonald's philosophy and theology must bear the same accusation; the intense love of the mystical runs through all, colours all, we have no objection to say, elevates all. But sometimes we think this makes him too intolerant to common life, and it is the very

ideal in his own nature which exaggerates deformities, when they walk the ordinary streets.

In these volumes, if he takes up his burden of denunciation at all,—as Dissenters have received its woes hitherto, so now tradespeople receive them; tradespeople and rich people. We greatly and affectionately admire Mr. MacDonald's tender and most elevated regard for the poor. We all love the poor, especially—at a distance. We have not the slightest doubt that those we understand as such—the labouring, the tried, and suffering, who have never been able rightly to make both ends meet—although, with the humblest fare, they have always been trying—are the best specimens of human nature; the most real, most wise, and most helpful. We quite think, with Mr. MacDonald, that, as a class, rich people are the most disagreeable of people—people who mostly contrive to make you feel your inferiority on the score of the cheque-book in the long run; usually ignorant, always supercilious, with the one idea of money and position narrowing every observation and view—with the means of knowing everything, and travelling everywhere, and reading all books, and seeing all pictures; the rich usually seem to us, of all people, those most open to compassion, on the score of the little they know, do, think, feel, or see. So that we are not behind Mr. MacDonald in his poor appreciation of them, and his belief in the thorough truth that “hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom.” And yet it seems to us that, when he takes in hand the tradesman or the rich merchant, and perhaps even rich people generally, he becomes unjust, from the very high demands made by the exalted conception in his own mind; and, after all, we suppose, it would be impossible for any such character as old Rogers to be nourished in the home of wealth.

We have thus hinted the side on which we might suggest some controversy with the writer; but our chief business is to commend to our readers the perusal of a book which ought greatly to increase the reputation of its richly endowed author; and to be very long, very high in popular estimation, as a healthful, helpful, many-coloured work of pathetic and imaginative genius.

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## III.

## LIFE INSIDE THE MONASTERY.\*

THE publication of Mr. Taylor's last volume of *Excursions among the Convents and Monasteries of France*, has made us acquainted with the first, in which he devoted his observations to those of Italy; and the interest of the last volume is even greater than that of the first; but there is sufficient variety to make both volumes pleasantly entertaining. A man who, in his first volume, tells us that he has visited not fewer than three-score Italian Monasteries, and then adds to these his manifold wanderings through those in France, can only have a succession of memories which most readers will be thankful to share. The life of monks has always been regarded as curious and romantic—indeed, seclude most things, or almost any person, and instantly interest is excited about them—their life is uncommon. They are lifted out of the region in which most lives are doomed to be spent; vulgarity, common-place, perhaps even monotony—for, monotonous as monastic existence seems, we can scarcely conceive it to be so monotonous as many of the ways and usages of society—a dinner-party, for instance; a lawyer's office, or a shop. The cell of the monk is not the only place remarkable for a round of samenesses, although we have come into the way of thinking so.

Mr. Taylor is a Protestant; although we are afraid he would not pass muster with the Protestant Association. He seems to have obtained introductions which, from time to time, have, throughout Italy and France, given him the curious insight possessed, we should think, by scarcely any Protestant before, of a guest in, we suppose, not less than one hundred monastic institutions. In these he has had apportioned to him, as a friendly visitor, his cell; in the Refectory he has shared with the monks their fare, which never seems to have been, in the experience of Mr. Taylor, of the pleasant description of the Friar of Orders Grey. Evidently a man of considerable poetic sensibility and devotional feeling, it seems to have been his pleasure to rise

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\* *Scenes in French Monasteries.* By Algernon Taylor. With illustrations. Charles J. Skeet.

*Convent Life in Italy.* By Algernon Taylor. Second Edition. Charles J. Skeet.

with the monks for their midnight or matin services; and to follow them in their pursuits and daily avocations, with no unkind or uncharitable, but with an affectionate and brotherly interest, evidently regarding them, as we really believe every sane soul must regard them, as curious specimens of fossilised humanity. Cloistral and cold, but usually kindly, courteous, and always, when accessible, interesting—which is at any rate more than can be said for everybody.

The records of monasteries have a very romantic interest, and little is known of their interior life. There are stories of inaccessible volumes, like *Ceasar of Hiesterback*; long monastic annals which, even if they were accessible, would be painful or almost impossible for ordinary literary eyes to read. The romance of Cloister Life is unwritten, nor does it lie in the way of Mr. Taylor to attempt to penetrate those buried stores and learned shrines, in which are embedded the monastic stories and traditions and usages. It is not for him to show how, in the hidden gorges of the mountains and other desert places, they became the kernel of an agricultural population, in places that had only before seen wild beasts; or to give the traditional rise of such buildings, and those arches—

That rose alternate row on row,  
On pondrous columns short and low,  
Which could twelve hundred years withstand  
Winds, waves, and northern pirate's hand.

Mr. Taylor seeks the Italian deserts; the French wildernesses we should think he may yet find; and there is, perhaps, still more interesting soil in Spain. He finds the soothing and delicious calm of solitude in the monastic churches—is fond of seeking the spots populous with carved imagery—or in deep silent forests, the stillness broken only by the toll of the bells. He does not, indeed, tell us of tales recited by the Monastery fire, like *Kenelm Digby*; but probably the monks never forgot they were in the company of a heretic, and did not give the rein to their tongues.

Strange creatures, indeed, in whom the vocation of the cell had absorbed and swallowed up apparently (but who could dare to say really?), every other feeling. Sometimes their lives passed amidst very considerable activity and monastic industry, as at *Aiguebelle*—and, we suppose, the Trappists generally. It is of this Abbey of *Aiguebelle*, in Dauphiny, Mr. Taylor interestingly says—giving us a glimpse of the mingling of pleasant industry and painful speechlessness in the life there:—

In a lonely glen of the south-western corner of Dauphiny, shut in

by overhanging boulders of rock—which are in part clothed with dark masses of wood, while here and there a rugged crag juts out in bold relief among the surrounding forest trees—stands the Cistercian abbey of Aiguebelle. The valley is fertilised as well by the monks' labour as by three streams—the Vence, the Ranc, and the Flammanche—whose limpid waters give to the monastery its names of Aiguebelle, a corruption of *aqua bella*. Some of its casements open upon stupendous cliffs that threaten to crush the convent beneath their enormous weight. At another point the view is bounded by banks of trees so dense as nearly to exclude the light of day. The severe character of this wild scenery is diversified by the homely aspect of neat patches of garden land, made productive by the Trappists' industry. But whether you look on bleached rocks, green woods, clear mountain streamlets, or well-tilled vineyards and potato beds; or whether, turning from nature to the work of man's hand, you survey the claustral arcades and noiseless corridors of the abbey itself, one characteristic is common to the whole scene—a profound and all-pervading stillness. It is a spot aptly chosen for a Trappist fraternity. The grave thoughts proper to monks, and the silence observed by those of La Trappe in particular, seem to harmonise with the tranquil solitude amid which the Cistercians of Aiguebelle live and die.

The general view of Aiguebelle abbey, with its long ranges of building in irregular outline, its gable ends and projecting turrets—the whole encircled by wooded hills—forms a pleasing picture. Internally, too, the abbey is replete with interest. An ancient cloister and circular chapter-house, a handsome church, and spacious dormitories, besides other apartments and offices suitable to a numerous community, with all, in different degrees, repay inspection. A marked feature in this monastery is the entrance court, lined with workshops where various handicrafts are assiduously plied. Round the sides, moreover, are rows of stables, pens for sheep and cattle, and sheds to cover carts and wagons from the weather. As I crossed the threshold of the outer gateway, the sound of hammer and saw, and of the smith's forge struck on my ear. The entire courtyard, in a word, was alive with industry: the industry of smith and farrier, carpenter and wheelwright, ostler and herdsman, baker and shoemaker, and other skilled artisans—monkish artisans, that is; and all appalled in monkish frock and hood:

“ Smith, cobbler, joiner, he that plies the shears,  
And he that kneads the dough———.”

With these sounds blended the occasional lowing of cattle, or bleating of sheep, and the passing and repassing of sundry brethren of the order, shepherds, or swineherds, perhaps, or ploughmen and wagoners with their shaggy teams. Amid this scene of active life and conflicting sounds, man's voice alone was hushed.

Mr. Taylor did not seek admission to these strange homes as a Protestant Inquisitor—he did not remain in them,



in order that he might find opportunities for taking up his testimony against them; it seems first to have fallen in his way to obtain entrance to one or two; and then, being, we presume, an accomplished gentleman, pretty much at large, he has followed tastes, and perhaps some sympathies for the poetic, the mediæval, and the picturesque, in obtaining the large acquaintance he has with them. Our present article, as resulting from a very pleasant intercourse with Mr. Taylor's books, is no argument upon Monkery at all. While the system is unquestionably, to our thought, unnatural; as most assuredly it is very uncomfortable—we are prepared to think that Protestantism is, and always has been, somewhat unjust to the monks. We can scarcely wish it to be otherwise. The unjust side is the safe side; the institution, originating very much in a crime against the instincts of society, has usually been very criminal and cruel to society. Monks have been fearful persecutors, as was to be expected; having done wrong to nature themselves, they are not likely to be careful to guard her from wrong in others. But we did not commence this paragraph for the purpose of saying this; but rather the very opposite thing, that there are noble ideas and aspirations, very often, perhaps always, at the foundation of the theory of monkhood. The Protestant theory of life is that it should be made as comfortable as possible. We should live to be comfortable; and if things go wrong, bear them as well as possible, in resignation to the will of God. At least this is rather a selfish theory, though it looks an attractive piece of common-sense. The monastic idea is based upon a philosophy of suffering; it is the acceptance of asceticism, holding that the highest ideal of human life is realised, not merely in patient, but even joyful endurance of pain and sorrow; and we suppose the popular impression about monks in Roman Catholic countries is very fairly represented in what a poor errand-boy at Campi, in Italy, said to Mr. Taylor. "But what would become of us sinners, if the friars did not pray for us? Were it not for the *religieuse*, the world would fall beneath the weight of sin; and these remain always in their convents, and do injury to nobody." Very finely expressed in an errand-boy; though we, of course, feel that it is not a religious class, but a religious race, we want to lighten the weight of the world's sin; and we suppose a tradesman, or labourer, fighting with the world's sin outside, and bravely overcoming, must be a nobler creature than the monk—

"Who quits a world, where strong temptations try,  
And since 'tis hard to combat, learns to fly."

If any of our readers suppose that the monastery of our day is relieved from many of those insane penances we associate with the past, Mr. Taylor will give a very different impression. St. Pachomius, an Egyptian Cœnobite, said that the cloister had its trials, no less than the world; and affirmed that, while in a neighbouring town there was only one devil, in the monastery over which he presided there were a thousand. Our author thought of this when, among the Passionists of Hardingham, he was woken up in the dead of night, by a discordant rattle, calling all the monks to the pleasant discipline of flagellation. For this purpose they are called up in the dead of the night, three nights in the week.

For this purpose the choir is literally, not comparatively, darkened, every ray of light being excluded; thus leaving it in black obscurity, so that you are unable to discern even your next neighbour. A moment afterwards your ears are assailed by the simultaneous cracking of a medley of whips, whose thongs beat the air with quickly repeated blows; and beat, too, something more solid than air, in the shape of the monks' own persons. A stranger unprepared for such a scene might again draw on his fancy, and imagine—to revert once more to St. Pachomius and his legion of demons—that those weird spirits had, in a sudden freak, transported themselves from the neighbouring dormitory to the pitch-dark choir: where the whisk, whisk of the corded thongs mingles with, and almost overpowers, the doleful Miserere chant!

Let no reader suppose that there was any child's play in it. We suppose the rascally garroters—who, having added wilful cruelty to their less repulsive crimes, receive the sentence of the cat, do not suffer more severely than these Passionists, who take upon themselves voluntarily this most dismal-looking sacrament of metal-twisted whipcord. Mr. Taylor asked to see the instrument of self-inflicted torture.

I was shown a whip made of several twisted lashes, each nearly as thick as my little finger, and all of them besmeared with blood. Some latitude is allowed in the choice of these instruments of self-torture, for this was stated to be a weapon more than usually formidable, as also was another belonging to a Passionist in priest's orders, which consisted of seven metal chains, voluntarily chosen in aggravation of the ordinary whipcord. One would think that its owner, an Italian under forty, though already numbering twenty years of religious profession, must be imbued with a very deep sense of the duty of penance, or feel an experimental conviction of the difficulty of keeping his own temperament in subjection, when he can spontaneously resort to the severe bodily punishment implied in the use of such a merciless weapon.

Man is a strange creature—a very hungry animal. We often

say his appetite grows by what it feeds on. If, like Oliver Twist, he feeds on very thin water-gruel, he asks for "more;" and if he be a millionaire, feeding like a gryphon, on gold—he asks for "more;" and if, like a poet, on fame, it is still "more;" and if he determine to feed on thongs and metal-knotted whip-cord and suffering, the infinite nature of the man still comes out in painful exaggerations of sin and expiation, and he still asks for *more*. We believe Protestantism errs grievously enough in setting up its comfortable standard and canon of existence; but what a grievous and painful misrendering of life, and ignorance of the gospel, there is in the laughless, speechless, everlasting silent system of the Trappist, or the nightly, self-inflicted lash of the Passionists of Hardinghen; and yet Mr. Taylor describes the Passionists as a bright and cheerful people, possessed even of a merry spirit, as gay as children; and it is while describing them that he remarks, how cheerfulness seems in all ages to have been a characteristic of the cloister. Nor do we see much reason to doubt the very considerable truth of Mr. Taylor's generalisation; this also should be a law of the human mind.

We gather from Mr. Taylor's volumes, that those dangerous creatures, women, are in most monasteries; and perhaps especially the Italian are dreaded as much as any traditions of the ancient rules would imply.

I knew two Catholic ladies who, in company with a priest, made an excursion from Milan to this Certosa, one of them being provided with a Papal brief, and the other hoping, as her companion, and supported, too, by the authority of her clerical friend, to be admitted. The lady named in the brief, and the priest, were shown over the convent, but the second lady had to content herself with seeing only the church. The reader will be amused to hear that in the brief referred to, it is directed that the lady shall be conducted through the monastery by three of the elder monks—"senioribus;" that her visit is to be made between sunrise and sunset; and that a bell is to be rung before her as she proceeds, in order, doubtless, to warn the fraternity to flee from the danger to which they might be exposed from so unaccustomed a visitor!

And the following are some of the author's own experiences of monkish ungallantry.

In illustration of the severity with which the "Clausura," or monastic enclosure, is enforced in Italy in convents of men, I may mention that an English lady told me that, happening to be walking in the neighbourhood of Pisa in the spring of 1858, she saw the gate of a monastery open, and a handsome cloister within. Wishing to see the cloister more thoroughly, and quite unaware that she was doing any-



thing wrong, she stepped inside the doorway. Many moments had not elapsed before a white-robed lay-brother of powerful frame emerged unexpectedly from the conventual buildings, and with the rapidity of lightning, taking her by the shoulders, forced her out of the cloister, loading her at the same time with reproaches for her unintentional intrusion.

I saw a similar occurrence myself in the Convent of La Concezione. The gateway is often besieged by beggars and others of both sexes, waiting the arrival of some of the friars. The men are allowed to enter the cloister, but women are strictly required to remain without. On one occasion, when I was walking in the cloister, an Italian woman, thinking, it would seem, that enough attention was not paid to her, stepped a foot or two inside the doorway, and seemed to be looking round for some one to speak to. No sooner, however, had she done so, than two of the porters (of whom, at this large monastery there are three) rushed from their lodge, and seizing her, one by one shoulder, and the other by the other, summarily ejected her from the claustral precincts. Probably, in both instances, the porters of the respective convents acted thus peremptorily, from a conviction that they would be held responsible for the slightest infraction of the monastic enclosure, which, in Italy, is looked upon as inviolable by any woman worthy of respect. Had the same persons been in the conventual church when it was desired to clear it of strangers, they would have been politely requested to leave; but for infringing the enclosure, however slightly, it was apparently deemed necessary to administer a pretty sharp rebuke.

We assure our readers that, in Mr. Taylor's volumes, they will find—we would say especially in that on the French monasteries—a most interesting succession of charming pictures and particulars; and we say this here, because we can by no means condense the interest into the two or three pages we can devote to the subject—his books realise to us with more distinctness than we are able to command, that these secluded and reserved men live in this great noisy roaring world of steam-engines, printing presses, electric telegraphs, and thronged and crowded cities still—as much as in the dark or in the middle ages.

In the spirit of conventual life, Mr. Taylor, with the monks, was often waited upon by some well-instructed man, of polished manners and good family, discharging all the menial duties of an ordinary servant, without impatience, awkwardness or shyness—on the contrary, with the utmost alacrity and cheerfulness, passing from guest to guest, or brother to brother, changing the plates with graceful ease—in the kitchen, and laundry, perhaps descending to what we are accustomed to regard as still more menial services; and, within half-an-hour

afterwards, in the pulpit, in the crowded church, with real eloquence and power, searching the consciences and bearing along the emotions of the congregation. We suppose most of our readers will feel that there is something certainly dignified and great in this, while, again, it is not unpleasant to see, as Mr. Taylor enables us, the brown-frooked capuchin contemplatively ministering to the wants of his little garden. We suppose it would be natural with any of us, as it was with our traveller, while he saw the lonely figure watering his plants, recreating himself from severe penances and self-imposed toils, to find in the monk a subject of profound human interest, unconsciously leading the mind to dwell on the moral tendencies of that theory of supererogatory self-denial, embodied in practice in the mediæval figure before his eyes; while in the convent garden, with his cowed companion, the slow notes of the Monastery bell began to roll on the air, calling to the prayers for the closing day.

The barefooted Capuchin now retired as silently as he had been plying his labour. The writer lingered yet a few moments, taking in the several characteristics and associations of the scene, over which a rich though transient illumination was shed by the radiant glories of a setting sun.

Meanwhile,

The bell of prayer rose slowly, plaintively,

and, as its last echoes died away, I passed from the gay, bright-tinted garden, into a confined and gloomy choir, where a number of brown-frooked friars were already assembled. A wooden lectern occupied the middle of the chancel, with a ponderous chorale resting upon it, ready open for service, and surmounted by the symbol—always to be seen in Capuchin choirs—of a withered palm branch. The plain desk; the big vellum book; the waving palm; and the arrangements of the place generally, constituted an exact type of what had become so familiar to me in my peregrinations among the Franciscan friaries of Italy.

The office of complin was beginning as I entered. This service, so called from its forming the complement of the day's devotions, opens with a public confession of sins. The fourth and other psalms follow; then come, successively, the Song of Simeon, an evening hymn, and a collect: the whole concluding with an anthem glorifying the Virgin Mary. After complin, a litany is said, and a lesson read out of some manual of asceticism; the choir being then darkened preparatory to the half hour's silent introspection, ever accompanying, in religious houses, the departing day. Within how many hearts present in that tiny choir, on that sultry summer's evening, were the thoughts soaring on the wings of—

The cherub Contemplation?

Or, on the other hand, in how many were the thoughts less of heaven than earth—earthly? To determine, were it possible, the numerical ratio between these two classes of men and monks, would be to solve the question, so difficult of solution, as to the degree in which the monastic system actually succeeds in realising its own standard of ascetic perfection.

This was at Aix, in Provence; and it affords a pleasant illustration of the quiet catholic spirit in which Mr. Taylor permitted himself to be drawn along through the scenes he visited. Shall we quote one or two other illustrations of his experience of nights in monasteries. They furnish illustrations of the entertaining way in which he recites his adventures.

In the early spring of 1860 I awoke on one occasion soon after midnight, as I supposed; and, believing it to be late for matins, hurriedly threw on my clothes, and found my way along an ancient dormitory, and down a handsome flight of stairs, and thence across the cloister, towards the priory church. It was customary to secure with lock and key a gate separating the cloister from a long covered gallery leading to the church, so as to prevent ingress to the convent through the nave whilst the monks were in choir. When, therefore, on reaching this gate, I found it fastened, I inferred that the brotherhood were already at morning prayer, and accordingly rang the bell, as had been my wont on several previous nights, in the expectation that an attendant would come to open it. All was, however, silent. Again I pulled the bell, but not a footstep or other sign of life could be heard. A third time I rang, yet no sound broke the death-like stillness of the venerable cloister, which was only saved from total darkness by the soft rays of a midnight moon, shining obliquely through the Norman arches, as it had done month after month for eight hundred years.

I stood wondering what had become of the monks and their matins, when I seemed to descry, in the silvery light, a figure draped in white at the extreme end of the cloister. For a moment I doubted whether I might not be mistaken, its colourless form being at first barely discernible in the pale moonbeams. The convent bell was mute; nor was there any stir as of a fraternity of Cœnobites aroused from slumber to sing praises to God in the still hours of night. But the "figure in white" continued to approach towards me at a measured though noiseless step, leaving no room for questioning its reality. It came up to me—stood still, and then spoke: it was the portly form of the prior himself! An explanation followed on my part as to why I had so pertinaciously disturbed the monks' rest; the prior, on the other hand, observing that the brotherhood were, certainly, a little late in rising, but less so than might appear from my watch, which was, he said, in advance of the convent clock.

A few minutes afterwards, as the brethren were assembling in the sacristy preparatory to matins, I heard the prior remark in a low but



jocular tone to one of his monks, "Voilà l'Anglais qui nous éveille pour matines!"

On another night, about Midsummer, 1863, I was making the best of my way to the church, unprovided with lantern or taper, when the dim oil lamp usually placed in the dormitory abutting on the cloister, proved either not to have been lit or to have burnt out. It was pitch dark; no mild moonbeam peeping in this time through the lofty corridor's barred casement, or through open portal, or cloister arch, "to lend enchantment to the view." Whilst groping my way from the dormitory into the adjoining claustral arcade, footsteps from behind seemed to strike on my ear, and on looking round, I discerned, amid the obscurity of night, a figure in black coming slowly down the flight of stairs after me. I paused a moment, thinking that by following instead of preceding the figure, whoever it might be, there would be less risk of stumbling over several steps that lay in my path, than if left to my own unaided efforts. But no sooner did I stop, than the figure in black stood motionless likewise. All around was as still as it was dark. Both of us remained stationary, neither apparently unwilling to yield to the other the initiative of moving. At last the figure advanced cautiously towards the spot where I was. It spoke not a word; and seemed on the point of passing me, when, to break the silence, I said, "It is a dark night." Scarcely were the words uttered, than the figure in black, without making any audible reply, took me gently by the hand, and so led me till we had got beyond the steps, and then (having now reached the gallery above-mentioned, barely wide enough for two abreast) walked behind me as far as the church door. On entering the nave I lost sight of my silent companion; and to this day am unable to say to whose opportune, though taciturn, guidance I was thus indebted, save that it was a "figure in black!"

Our author's account of the order of Premontre, especially of St. Michel de Frigolet, is very interesting—indeed, it seems to have been in this Monastery the incidents happened we have just quoted. The Dominicans of St. Maximin, too, with whose friars and vicar he had long and instructive intercourse—but, perhaps, the most interesting of all his sketches are the accounts of his visits to the Grande Chartreuse, in Dauphiny; and the Abbey of Septfons—although the last seems to have been the grimmest and most inhospitable he visited. Armed with a letter of introduction to the Abbot, he yet failed to obtain any entrance beyond the merest outskirts—the Abbot seeming to shrink from any personal contact with English heretics. The author is just, however, to bear his testimony to his impression that it was the most thoroughly monastic of the many religious houses he visited. His intercourse with the domestic who waited upon him is given with remarkable *naïveté*, and is most amusing; but we shall leave our readers to derive entertainment from it

in Mr. Taylor's volume. In the Grand Chartreuse, in the most beautiful of deserts, our author seems to have spent some time ; and to love well the memory of his days and nights spent there—hushed by its midnight offices ; the singular simplicity of its unsensational choral service, alternately darkened or lit up by the monks' lanterns. For its most lonely Carthusian men he seems to have contracted a personal affectionateness, although to him they must have been almost as distant and unapproachable as they are to us ; and his mind seems to have been especially brought to that state in which we pass away from the more salient points of monastic existence in the choir and the refectory, to those mysteries of the soul, those temptations of silence and solitude, known only in the monk's lonely cell.

Of the Italian Monasteries, we have left ourselves no space to speak—but if this life be interesting to our readers, we know of no works which will so immediately give them entrance within monastic walls, and bring so vividly before the eye the men who have made those walls their homes. Mr. Taylor, as we have said, is really a Protestant ; and the so-called Ages of Faith are to him, as they are to us, only lawless times ; he does not desire to see the world or the church reconverted to monastic ideas ; but his books are kind, thoughtful, and just ; and have none of the harsh flippancy which every reader must have regretted in Mr. Curzon's otherwise delightful and noble *Monasteries of the Levant*.

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## IV.

## THE DUKE OF ARGYLL ON THE REIGN OF LAW.\*

THIS is a truly bracing book ; strong and strengthening. It would be a remarkable book from any quarter, or any pen—from the pen of a Duke it is especially remarkable ; and we must express a real joy that such a subject, the chiefest and most important topic of thought in the discussions of our age—the subject to which the acutest, the most illustrious, and thoroughly furnished thinkers of our time have addressed themselves, girding and harnessing themselves for the conflict which faith sustains with unbelief in its last retreat and most secret stronghold, should have been discussed by one whose illustrious name will give his volume prestige and acceptance in many circles—while its fine broad width of thought ; its apparent thorough acquaintance with all the departments of, and the writers, upon the subject of which it treats—the beautiful interest of many of its pictures of arrangement, contrivance, or illustrations of natural objects often reminding us of Paley—its condensed and concentrated wisdom in shorter aphorisms or sayings ; its frequent happy applications of the lines of poets to these departments of physical or metaphysical [thought—above all, we trust we shall not seem to speak the language of vulgar prejudice, when we say, its lofty and reverent faith ; its harmony with what we want to be true, for we are prejudiced in favour of Christianity, and the old house of faith. We feel that the heart pines and despairs, if we can for a moment feel or fear that it is only a phantom house, and that we are following only a “cunningly devised fable”—the happy and reverent reading of Scripture, and the application of texts in a true, philosophic, but perhaps not often noted sense—the clearness of the style, the keen dissection and separation in the meaning of words which have served the purposes of unbelief, because used ambiguously. The pleasure, therefore, with which young and ordinarily furnished minds may read it, and find help from it, while yet we think there are passages in which Mr. Stuart Mill, for instance, would feel that his words are fairly and triumphantly grappled with on their own ground—all these

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\* *The Reign of Law.*—By the Duke of Argyll.—Strahan.



particulars give this volume, to our sense, a quite invaluable character. Peers, and especially of the more illustrious order, so seldom do anything that can be esteemed noted, only in literature, that we cannot but express our great and unqualified admiration, that from his vast engagements, the Duke of Argyll should have found time to come forward, not only in vindication of the dearest rights of faith, but that he should have performed his task in such a manner that his book may be commended as a searching and helpful analysis to thoroughly thoughtful enquirers, a book whose requirements will not be satisfied by a hasty perusal or temporary glance.

It is, in fact, a new discussion of the question of the mutual relations of the natural to the supernatural. The first chapter is entitled *The Supernatural*. "What is it? What do we mean by it?" Thus the writer commences his volume; but we surely think that in his reference to the words of Guizot, he is somewhat unjust to that great man. We must take the liberty, too, to believe that, in this chapter, he limits too much the idea of the supernatural. M. Guizot has, in a striking passage in his *Meditations on Christianity*, spoken of the supernatural as the natural sphere of the soul, the essence of its faith, hope and love. Ceasing to believe in what is miraculous, it loses the secret of divine life; and henceforth its course is downward to the dust, and not seldom to the dirt. Now, the Duke truly says that the natural has, in our day, been casting out the supernatural; the idea of natural law, the universal reign of a fixed order of things—yet he demurs to M. Guizot, when he tells us that God is the supernatural in a person; and says that it is rather a rhetorical figure than a definition. Can we attain to a better definition?—and if imagination concentrates language to that pithy representation of the Highest of the universe, can we conceive words more completely representing to us the will which originates all, informs all, is informed of all, and controls all? The object of the writer is, very naturally and admirably to show that the perception of the sequences and generations of things throughout all nature—man himself belonging to nature—does not involve the contradiction of all things as means, and in the hands of Infinite Will; we must think that when the Duke says "by supernatural power we mean power, independent of the use of means," he adopts himself a very arbitrary definition—his object is to show that all things confess the dominion and reign of law, that all things are governed by intention; but then he himself says that law is made to do the work of will—this is everything—infinite will. This is the battle-ground of modern thought in contradistinction to those ideas which either

make the whole range of things to be without any testimony to an infinite God, or leave Him to be an infinite, denuded, nothing—the *Thal* of Hindooism—a being without character, consciousness, or will. The ascent to a faith in an infinite, holy, personal will, is what M. Guizot means; and what we all mean, we hope, by the supernatural—one whose *pre*vision and *pro*-vision run through the whole chain of causes and consequences, through all spaces and times, and creatures; and that this is the Duke's own conception, too, is clear from his definition of the term "Law" in the last of five classifications, beneath which he reduces the term. He says:—

And this brings us to the Fifth meaning in which the word Law is habitually used in Science,—a meaning which is indeed well deserving of attention. In this sense, Law is used to designate, not any observed Order of facts,—not any Force to which such Order may be due,—neither yet any combinations of Force adjusted to the discharge of function, but—some purely Abstract Idea, which carries up to a higher point our conception of what the phenomena are and of what they do. There may be no phenomena actually corresponding to such Idea, and yet a clear conception of it may be essential to a right understanding of all the phenomena around us. A good example of Law in this sense is to be found in the law which, in the Science of Mechanics, is called the First Law of Motion. The law is, that all motion is in itself, (that is to say, except as affected by extraneous Forces,) uniform in velocity, and rectilinear in direction. Thus, according to this law, a body moving, and not subject to any extraneous Force, would go on moving for ever at the same rate of velocity, and in an exactly straight line.

Now, there is no such motion as this existing on the earth or in the heavens. It is an Abstract Idea of Motion which no man has ever, or can ever, see exemplified. Yet a clear apprehension of this Abstract Idea was necessary to a right understanding and to the true explanation of all the motions which are actually seen. It was long before this idea was arrived at; and, for want of it, the efforts of Science to explain the visible phenomena of Motion were always taking a wrong direction. There was a real difficulty in conceiving it; because, not only is there no such motion in Nature, but there is no possibility by artificial means of producing it. It is impossible to release any moving body from the impulses of extraneous Force. The First Law of Motion is therefore a purely Abstract Idea. It represents a Rule which never operates as we conceive it, by itself, but is always complicated with other Rules which produce a corresponding complication in result. Like many other laws of the same class, it was discovered, not by looking outwards, but by looking inwards; not by observing, but by thinking. The human mind, in the exercise of its own faculties and powers, sometimes by careful reasoning, sometimes by the intuitions of genius unconscious of any process, is able, from time to time,

to reach now one, now another, of those purely Intellectual Conceptions, which are the basis of all that is intelligible to us in the Order of the Material World. We look for an ideal order or simplicity in material Law; and the very possibility of exact Science depends upon the fact that such ideal Order does actually prevail, and is related to the abstract conceptions of our own intellectual nature. It is in this way that many of the greatest discoveries of Science have been made. Especially have the great pioneers in new paths of discovery been led to the opening of those paths by that fine sense for abstract truths which is the noblest gift of genius. Copernicus, Kepler, and Galileo were all guided in their profound interpretations of visible phenomena, by those intuitions which arise in minds finely organised, brought into close relations with the mind of Nature, and highly trained in the exercise of speculative thought. They guessed the truth before they proved it to be true; and those guesses had their origin in Abstract Ideas of the mind, which turned out to be ideas really embodied in the Order of the Universe. So constantly has this recurred in the history of Science, that, as Dr. Whewell says, it is not to be considered as an exception, but as the rule.

Carry this thinking forward to God, and we have here a definition of the supernatural, in fact, in harmony with M. Guizot. It is clear we do reach a region which, although natural, is not less impalpable and intangible than real. We live beneath the reign of law, but are not the less compelled to feel, as the writer says, that all observation shows helplessness in things to prove law, ever present as a master, eminently suggestive of the idea that law has never been absent as a servant. As with man, so with his Maker, a physical cause and a mental purpose are not antagonistic—only one is more comprehensive than the other. "We need not be jealous then," says the writer, "when new domains are claimed as under the 'reign of law—an agency through which we see working everywhere some purpose of the everlasting will.'" Thus, when it is said that the whole order of nature is one vast system of contrivance, contrivance is only arrangement to satisfy the unchangeable demands of law. It may be that all natural forces are resolvable into some one force—as, indeed, the modern doctrine of the correllation of forces seems to indicate this; and this one force, into which all others return again, may be only a mode of action of the Divine Will. We have no instruments to meet this last analysis; but, in the definition of Law quoted above, we have given to us a hint of the infinite possibility. Life precedes organisation. Law seems to precede life. The Duke deals with apparent exceptions to contrivance among the creatures, we think, in a very masterly manner; and, in doing so, certainly defeats some of the supposed results of the



Darwinian theory. There are structures in which we cannot realise any use—contrivances which often fail of their effect. It is possible to trace the existence of rudimentary, or aborted organs; the existence of teeth, for instance, in the jaws of the whale—teeth which never cut the gum, and are useless to the animal. These are not to be regarded, says the Duke, as the fictions or bad jokes of nature; abortive organs mean something, and they mean it truly. He turns the tables on Professor Huxley, when, in his work on *Man's Place in Nature*, in the frontispiece, he draws what our writer calls “a grim and grotesque procession” of man led on by his illustrious predecessors, the apes; when he shows how the wonderful type stands behind all things, giving premonitions in the lowest of that to which it intends to attain in the highest. In a striking passage, after the writer has shown how, in man's frame, there is no aborted member, which perhaps we might hopefully question, every part being put to its highest use in combination and adjustment, he continues:—

All these facts must convince us that we must enlarge our ideas as to what is meant by Use in the economy of Nature. In the first place, it must be so interpreted as to include ornament; and in the second place, it must include also, not merely Actual Use, but Potential Use, or the capacity of being turned to use in new creations. In this point of view, rudimentary or aborted organs need no longer puzzle us; for in respect to Purpose they may be read either in the light of History, or in the light of Prophecy. They may be regarded as indicating always either what had already been, or what was yet to be. Why new creations should never have been made wholly new;—why they should have been always moulded on some pre-existing Forms;—why one fundamental ground-plan should have been adhered to for all Vertebrate Animals, we cannot understand. But as a matter of fact it is so. For it appears that Creative Purpose has been effected through the instrumentality of Forces so combined as to arrange the particles of organic matter in definite forms: which forms include many separate parts having a constant relation to each other and to the whole, but capable of arrestment or development according as special organs are required for the discharge of special functions. Each new creation seems to have been a new application of these old materials. Each new House of Life has been built on these old foundations. Among the many wonders of Nature there is nothing more wonderful than this—the adaptability of the one Vertebrate Type to the infinite variety of Life to which it serves as an organ and a home. Its *basement* has been so laid that every possible change or addition of superstructure could be built upon it. Creatures destined to live on the earth, or in the earth, on the sea, or in the sea, under every variety of condition of existence, have all been made after that one pattern; and each of them with as close an adaptation to special function as if the pattern had

been designed for itself alone. It is true that there are particular parts of it which are of no use to particular animals. But there is no part of it which is not of indispensable use to some member of the group; and there is one Supreme Form in which all its elements receive their highest interpretation and fulfilment. It is indeed, wonderful to think that the feeble and sprawling paddles of a Newt, the ungainly flippers of a Seal, and the long leathery wings of a Bat, have all the same elements, bone for bone, with that human hand which is the supple instrument of Man's contrivance, and is alive, even to the finger-tips, with the power of expressing his Intellect and his Will. Here again the Laws of Nature are seen to be nothing but combinations of Force with a view to Purpose: combinations which indicate complete knowledge, not only of what is, but of what is to be, and which foresees the End from the Beginning.

And this leads further on to satisfaction in the great mystery, that we have powers impelling us to ask questions, which we have no powers enabling us to solve. We fall back upon texts and forms of words, built up of the materials of analogy and conjecture. We beat against the bars in vain, but our desires are revelations to us. Had a gorilla ever infinite yearnings to become a man? We wonder did ever a dog desire to be his master? It may be said, such questions press into the mere field of unresolvable conjecture—yet man surely feels himself in possession of aborted powers of soul, which only immortality and infinite love can satisfy; and it is in the presence of such a thought that, with not less devotion than truth, the writer says:—

The only real rest is in the confession of ignorance, and the confession, too, that all ultimate Truth is beyond the reach of Science. It is probable that even the nearest methods of Creation, though far short of ultimate truths, lie behind a veil too thick for us to penetrate. It is here surely, if it is anywhere in the sphere of physical investigation, that the Man of Science may lay down the weapon of his analysis, and say, "I do not exercise myself in great matters, or in things which are too high for me."

We could have wished to have made some remarks upon the Duke's mode of dealing with the vaunted talk about the immutability and invariability of natural laws. Here also a similar range of thought to that on which we have just dwelt meets us. It is only with certain limitations that law can be called immutable and invariable. It is not rigid, argues our author; and the commonest mind may perceive how true this is. It is not immutable and invariable; but, on the contrary, says the writer, is pliable, subtle, and various. This is a form of

thought which, as it has been used most servicably for the cause of scepticism, needs to be tracked most resolutely to its essential fallacy. In fact, the same law has such a pliability that it serves most opposite intentions. Every law of nature is liable to counteraction, while no elementary force of nature is liable to change. Laws habitually counteract each other in the manner and degree required by some definite result. We must quote the last paragraph of the book, in which this doctrine of the uniformity and invariability of nature and natural laws are dealt with:—

It is an unspeakable comfort that when we come to close quarters with this vision of Invariable Law seated on the Throne of Nature, we find it a phantom and a dream—a mere nightmare of ill-digested Thought, and of “God’s great gift of speech abused.” We are, after all, what we thought ourselves to be. Our freedom is a reality, and not a name. Our faculties have in truth the relations which they seem to have to the Economy of Nature. Their action is a real and substantial action on the Constitution and Course of things. The Laws of Nature were not appointed by the great Lawgiver to baffle His creatures in the sphere of Conduct, still less to confound them in the region of Belief. As parts of an Order of things too vast to be more than partly understood, they present, indeed, some difficulties which perplex the intellect, and a few also, it cannot be denied, which wring the heart. But, on the whole, they stand in harmonious relations with the Human Spirit. They come visibly from One pervading Mind, and express the authority of one enduring Kingdom. As regards the moral ends they serve, this, too, can be clearly seen, that the purpose of all Natural Laws is best fulfilled when they are made, as they can be made, the instruments of intelligent Will, and the servants of enlightened Conscience.

And as this is the closing paragraph of the book, it may serve to show as distinctly as any, the purpose for which it was written. Such a subject, so treated, might well have commanded much more space than we can assign to it. We trust that we shall introduce a book which ought to be read for its own sake, and for the sake of the immense and infinitely interesting topic of which it treats, to many of our readers. And still, before we lay it down, we feel disposed to cite a few of its more short and appropriate gold leaves of expression, in which the writer has put some of the best results of reverent thought:—

#### IRREVERENT THINKERS.

There are men who would stare into the very Burning Bush without a thought that the ground on which they stand must be Holy Ground. It is not now of wood or stone that men make their Idols, but of their



own abstract conceptions. Before these, borrowing for them the attributes of Personality, they bow down and worship.

#### THE TWO GREAT EVERLASTING ENEMIES TO MATERIALISM.

For there are two great enemies to Materialism,—one rooted in the Affections, the other in the Intellect. One is the power of THINGS HOPED FOR—a power which never dies: the other is the evidence of THINGS NOT SEEN—and this evidence abounds in all we see.

#### NATURE AND MAN.

Nature is a great armoury of weapons, and implements, for the service and the use of Will.

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And as in the material world no effort gives so fully the sense of work achieved as the subjugation of some Natural Force under the command of Will, so in the world of Mind no triumphs of the Spirit are happier than those by which some natural tendency of Human Character is led to the accomplishment of a purpose which is wise and good.

#### SCIENTIFIC ANALYSIS.

Under that analysis Matter dissolves and disappears, surviving only as the phenomena of Force; which again is seen converging along all its lines to some common centre—"sloping through darkness up to God.

#### THE ETERNAL AND THE TEMPORAL.

The deeper we go in Science, the more certain it becomes that all the realities of Nature are in the region of the Invisible, so that the saying is literally, and not merely figuratively true, that the things which are seen are temporal, and it is only the things which are not seen that are eternal.

We are now compelled to lay down a book which, however it may contain pages from which we are compelled to dissent, can only exercise a fine healthful influence on the honest and dispassionate mind. We may think, indeed, as we have already said, that in some pages the author too distinctly seems to lose sight of a supernatural world, with its powers and its peoples; as in the following:—

There is, indeed, a distinction which finds its expression in common language between the works of Man and the works of Nature. A honeycomb, for example, would be called a work of Nature, but not a steam-engine. This distinction is founded on a true perception of the fact that the Mind and Will of Man belong to an order of existence very different from physical laws, and very different also from the fixed and narrow instincts of the lower animals. It is a distinction bearing witness to the universal consciousness that the Mind of Man has

within it something of a truly creative energy and force—that we are in a sense “fellow-workers with God,” and have been in a measure “made partakers of the Divine nature.” But in that larger and wider sense in which we are here speaking of the Natural, it contains within it the whole phenomena of Man’s intellectual and spiritual nature, as part, and the most familiar of all parts, of the visible system of things. In all ordinary senses of the term, Man and his doings belong to the Natural, as distinguished from the Supernatural.

We have shown, we think, that the writer himself is compelled to rest the ultimate issues and explanations of all things upon the inexplicable and impalpable; upon the law of the idea, distinctly conceived, although untracked and undetected. Now this is, we suppose, what all minds mean by the supernatural; not merely the super-human or the super-material, but the Infinite Power which has, no doubt, laws of His own nature, by which he is conditioned, but which are as yet, quite unknown or but dimly descried by us—working, indeed, in all the scene by means, and compelling us probably to the conclusion that all means we behold are related to purposes, but all purposes related to one great purpose, one supreme will, enfolding, embracing, and encompassing all things, even as infinite space encompasses all the stars.

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## V.

## THE EDITOR IN HOT WATER.\*

WE are only aware of the publication indicated at the foot of this page by the friendly courtesy of the publishers of the *Eclectic Review*. Purporting to be addressed to the "Editor" from the author; its author has never placed a copy in our hands, or addressed a copy to us; and certainly, from that which the writer calls our "august" state, we should never have descended to notice it—but for the word "*falsehood*," which occurs amongst the other flowers of rhetoric which this writer, who claims quite a distinct insight to the mind of the Spirit, forms into a kind of verbal posey, and offers for our acceptance.

The groans of the writer are wrung from him by the operation we performed in dissecting and amputating his production called "The Organisation of Christianity;" which we more truthfully described as "A Plea for the *Disorganisation* of "Christianity." His opinion that it was "a wretched production," full of "absurdities;" that "the august editor of the "*Eclectic* never reads what he pens;" that he "pities the man "who could write such trash;" that he is "a penny-a-liner;" that he is "a mixture of haughty self-conceit and flippant "buffoonery; an ancient mountebank and merry-andrew combined;" that he is one "of those whose carcasses must fall in "the wilderness;" that he is "reckless" in his statements, &c., &c.,—the aromatic perfume of these sweet and refreshing flowers of speech may be left to waste their own sweetness on the desert air; but the charge of "*falsehood*"—that the article is, in letter and in spirit, utterly and absolutely untrue, may perhaps be of sufficient importance to command the writer's and the reader's attention for a moment. We suppose every Reviewer has the sad hap sometimes to listen to the groans and execrations of his victims.

In the state of wounded vanity to which Mr. Dunn has descended, it seems to him as if Reviewers were the most despicable of mortals—a wicked, vile, and worthless race. But their function, and their place, is exhibited in the case

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\* *The Immoralities of Religious Criticism. A Letter to the Editor of the "Eclectic Review."* By Henry Dunn. Simpkin and Marshall.



before us ; it is well to present the character of books, to exhibit their follies and their fallacies, and to do this in the very degree in which they are likely to mislead—or, as is the more pleasant task, to point out their beauties and admirable features. For our part, we believe the task of the Reviewer will be rather to praise and to encourage, than to blame, to satirise, and condemn.

Thus conscientiously in the interests of religion we have desired to use our poor function ; and, during our Editorship, we have uttered to authors many more words of gratitude and admiration than of condemnation. We know nothing of Mr. Dunn ; *we quoted his words without garbling*. Why should we turn him into a target for our “trash ;” our “flippant conceit and buffoonery ?” We looked at his book on its own character and merits—this is our immorality. Any amount of flattery would have been moral ; censure, or dissent, are immoral. We were guilty of no personality—if of severity, it was only in the simple exhibition of Mr. Dunn’s ideas, in their nakedness and simplicity of meaning—nothing, except the singular want of truth, and the insolence of expression, in this letter to us, which would not lead us to receive with great respect any of his opinions. We had read and formed our opinions upon his book before we knew him to be the author : for this he charges us with falsehood. Let us see :—

(1.) He says, “I wonder whether the august writer of the *Eclectic* ever reads what he pens !” “I am afraid the fact is, “that up to this hour, he is quite ignorant of the contents of the “book he has twice undertaken to review. But, if so, where is “his conscience ?” He then proceeds to garble and cut extracts from a brief notice of the book—in the *Eclectic* for February, 1866 ; *quotes, as if the book were praised and commended ; omits the passages in which it is summarily condemned !* What we said, and what Mr. Dunn does not quote—but what any reader may find by referring back to the number, was “For “ourselves we cannot believe the case to be so bad as this author “would have us to regard it as being. But, so far from less “organisation, we incline exceedingly to the faith that we need “more. No ! No ! a doctrine like this,” &c., &c. Mr. Dunn has actually quoted our words as a commendation, leaving out the two words which expressed our strong dissent. Then we go on to say : “We suppose immortal spirits exist without organ- “isms ; but earth and society, even in matters of religion, need “an organism to hold and sustain the life ; and the spirit must “exist on earth in the same way as the soul in the body. Dis- “organised Christianity is the proper antithesis and conclusion “to this writer’s argument—and what sort of thing may that

"be?" Falsehood! conscience! a pretty sort of man this to talk of one or the other! In fact, we admit, when we noticed the book nine months since, we did so kindly—we regarded it as a piece of unsubstantial moonshine; the production of some dilettantic amateur professor of religion, with a certain kind of gas-bag of religious whims and theories; but when we found the book circulating, we gave it a more ample but not more absolute analysis. The one review was the expanded counterpart of the other,—but in both instances we treated the book with respect, supposing in our ignorance that it was the production of a Christian gentleman—which faith, in both particulars, is worn very thin by this time. Will a man lie for God?

We are not aware of any words in our notice of the "Organisation of Christianity," which we have, upon the score of Christian truth, or even natural honesty of sentiment, to retract; or which can be, with any propriety, revised. Mr. Dunn, when he throws down his opinions in books, should be aware that they also will be tried in that furnace of opinion which "tries every man's work" of what sort it is. All that we gather from his letter to us is that, with a clever jesuitry of expression, he is prepared to double the faces of words, and is really afraid of the avowal of his own opinions.

(2.) Thus our readers will see they cannot rely on Mr. Dunn's quotations. As he has garbled us, so he garbles himself. For every statement we made as to the doctrine of the book, *we cited, and in no instance garbled, a quotation.* To illustrate the author's meaning, for instance, Mr. Dunn, or the author of the "Organisation of Christianity," teaches *organisation has been the curse of the Church in all ages.* He says:—

Hence their low moral state, their crimes, their notion that they might excusably do almost anything for the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

Such was the end of a great, and, to human eye, successful attempt to subdue the world to Christ by means of an ORGANISED CHRISTIANITY.

After this, could we be wrong in saying "the writer would have all churches broken up, dissolved, scattered; and individualism, solitary and alone, exercise its influence?" Mr. Dunn would have some minimum kind of communion; of what kind we may suppose, when in this very letter to us, we find him quoting, with approval, the singular opinions of our esteemed friend, the Rev. J. H. Hinton; "*that public worship is a solecism in thought, and an hypocrisy in act;*" and that "*public worship is one of the great misfortunes of the age;*" and that, "if there was one thing more offensive than another, it was

“ the amount of hypocrisy presented in so-called public worship-  
“ ping services ! ”

Mr. Dunn thinks these sayings throw light upon his organised Christianity. We dare say they do ; much the same sort of light reflected from gin and salt kindled into a flame in a darkened room, livid when not lurid,—ghastly and ghostly. Such is Mr. Dunn’s theology, and such would be his church—unsubstantial, phantom-like ; a baseless, Bibleless, extraordinary mixture of prudish pietism and Rationalism.

(3.) Mr. Dunn has no hesitation in breaking up all religious societies ; for he says, “ the relative position of church and “ world are changed ; ” that is, we suppose, that the world is now the church.

Showing the extent to which he is entirely one with these really charming sentiments, *Mr. Dunn confesses that, to him, the diffusion of religious truth, and knowledge, and profession is a calamity ; and that, by this unhealthy action, society becomes so much the worse.* He says—

We ask then, *has the standard of godliness as a fact been lowered in consequence of the extension of a religious profession ?* It is not for me to decide this grave question. I can only state what, right or wrong, is the general opinion of Christianised society.

He avows, even more distinctly than in the *Organisation of Christianity*, that the profession of Christianity makes no difference in men. He says “ there is no perceptible difference in “ the conduct of Christian persons. As compared with others, “ they are not less greedy of gain, more honourable, more “ truthful, or more disinterested.” Alas ! it is true ! The same field, as our Lord said, bears the tares and the wheat ; the same net gathered fish of every kind. What then ? Our Lord said, “ Let both grow together ; ” and he still sent forth his teachers to be fishers of men. It is a hard and cruel world ; all the harder and more cruel, because it has Christians of the type of Mr. Dunn in it—and many are weak, and many are frail, and all are imperfect ; but it is still true that “ the Son of “ Man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and “ gave authority to his servants ; and to every man his work, “ and commanded the porter to watch.”

(4.) We are wicked to affirm that it is the writer’s intention to prevent sinners from being brought to Christ. Why, does not the man say, in the book *Organised Christianity ?*

*Are we, then, to conclude that the particular commission now under notice, “ Preach the Gospel to every creature,” was given exclusively to the*



*apostles*, and to those who should receive from them, or immediately from the Holy Spirit, gifts of tongues or of healing,—miraculous powers, the exercise of which unquestionably arrested attention, and enabled the preacher to communicate intelligibly and with authority, in any language, the good news he had to impart?

*I think we must.* For whatever obligation may rest upon any of us—minister or layman—to spread the glad tidings of redemption,—and I should be the last to deny such an obligation,—it seems clear enough that *this particular command*, as given by our Lord, cannot be separated from the promise by which it was accompanied.

And again—

Apart from the command given to the apostles, “Preach the Gospel to every creature,”—a command which, as I have shown, was accompanied by the gift of *special power* for the accomplishment of the work, and by this superhuman aid *fulfilled* in apostolic days—I can find no exhortation in Scripture calculated to lead to the belief that the duty of evangelising the world *by aggressive action* really rests upon us.

And again—

I notice that the *present purpose* of God, so far as it is revealed in Holy Scripture, seems rather to be *the perfecting* of the few than the general improvement of the many.

And again—

The ministry is instituted rather for “the perfecting of the saints” than for the conversion of the world; and if *that chief end* is not generally attained, he thinks it fitting to ask *why* it is not.

“*The perfecting of the few!*”—“*The perfecting of the saints!*” We know this talk of old. “Resolved, *We are the saints.*” Right or wrong, “we have not so learned Christ.” To bless the world; to say to all, “Yet there is room;” to influence all, “till we *all* come to the measure of the stature of the perfect man,” “the fulness of Him who filleth all in all;” such, we believe, to be more like “the measure of the man; that is, of the angel,” than Mr. Dunn’s little, dwarfed, Lilliputian churchling, with its bad morals, and bad manners, and bad theology, and bad taste.

But, in fact, all through the book is selfish, hard, cold, and unfeeling;—let the world be damned—so that I and mine be saved. This is the cheerful and hilarious faith of this writer, who can so adroitly enter into “the mind of the Spirit,” and garble extracts.

(5.) But we are really afraid to pursue the matter ; nor had we intended to have proceeded to this length. We remarked upon the miserable manner in which, in his book, the writer handles Scripture. All tones of comfort—all precious sweetness of consolation—his narrow rationalistic method of dealing, would pass over ; and then he reminds us that Dr. Pye Smith enquires :—

“ Are we at liberty to put any meaning upon the Word of God different from *its own* proper, designed, and genuine sense, as ascertained by competent investigation ? ”

And Dr. Whately says :—

“ But a misapplication of a Scripture text, though it may be harmless in some particular instance, affords countenance to a most pernicious practice.”

Undoubtedly ! But a narrow range of thought will see no analogy where a quick mind will perceive a very distinct and immediate one ; and, upon the principle, carried forward in the light of Mr. Dunn’s meaning, everything in Scripture is pared away, save mere didactic statement. Moreover, has Mr. Dunn never heard of the interpretation of Scripture by the analogy of faith ? We believe the Old Testament and the New to present a vast scheme of Representationalism. Have we then “ no part in Jacob ? ” Have we no place in Israel ? Are those old words of prophets which ring, or toll, or chime so wonderfully, lost to us ? Have they no meaning now ? Is it a pernicious practice to apply the promises made to the Jews ? Must we not put any other meaning than the first proper designed sense upon those words ? Is all lost, like the sounds of the bells and the sheen of the pomegranates, and the blaze of the Urim ? We do not intend to be cheated thus by this saintly man, who, it seems, would deal with the words of our Bible as with the extracts from our article—just take so much as pleases him and no more. Augustine and Matthew Henry read their Bible very differently ; often we are unable to follow them, but we had rather err with them than be right with him.

In a word, Mr. Dunn reminds us of an old lady whom we knew once. “ Ah ! ” said the dear, simple old soul ; “ if I began “ my religious life again, I would belong to no church. I would go “ first to one, and then to another, and receive good from all ; ” and we replied, “ A capital method, madam, that unsectarian “ taste of yours ; and so, if you were beginning house-keeping “ again ; why be at the cost, trouble, taxation, and exclusiveness

“of your own household? Visit among your friends, and “spend now a month with one, and now with another—it “would save you a world of trouble, and be very cheap.” Is this Mr. Dunn’s idea? Alas! it is true; our religious houses are not perfect; many improvements might be suggested. We are disposed to avail ourselves of them, and not go out into the pitiless tempest of the world—at any rate, until we have a better tabernacle. Mr. Dunn or anybody else could pull a house to pieces, but we want—a building improved.

But we lay down our pen. We will have no more to do with Mr. Dunn and his affairs; and, although we have written with a quiet mildness of spirit, it is only because we have constantly reminded ourselves of the saying of Demosthenes; that he would not answer by recrimination, lest in that overcoming he should be overcome. We feel that it might have been more to our taste to have said nothing further in reply to Mr. Dunn, than simply to advise those who might be misled by his letter to read his book; his surreptitious quotations from our previous notice, and his importation of fresh material, have led to our course of reply. We understand Mr. Dunn’s letter to us is to be stitched with this number of our *Review*, which also will remind our readers of two proverbs, about “some people and their money being soon parted,” and others who have “more money than wit.”

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## VI.

## OUR BOOK CLUB.

YEAR after year, the tides of books seem to bear and break into a great variety and multiplicity of waves—it might well create wonder, while the cohorts and regiments of volumes, in their sparkling regimentals and manifold weaponage, riflery, and artillery, bear down upon an unhappy editor, who has to read them all, or see that they be all read and reviewed in their due order. It might well, we say, provoke a marvel, and stir the question, whether, on the whole, any other people than unhappy editors read far beyond the outsides; and whether people in general do not make the acquaintance with books, as civilians do with regiments, simply looking at them and admiring their finery; but, when we remember what, by a not unnatural figure of speech, we may call an infinite empire—that is through which the English language is spoken, what a multiplicity of tastes, minds, and ages it has; and how now almost everybody in it asks for a book of some literary dimension or other—Lilliputian, or Brogdignagian, and that there is a market for books of no intelligence, or high intelligence—stupid books, and wise books,—books with nothing in them, appealing to a very large class of sympathetic readers, and books full as an egg; books for learned folks, and for unlearned folks,—dark books, and bright books; some as mediæval as a monk, some as plain as a Quaker used to be; quarrelsome books, chatty books, fireside books, scientific books, ready, like Puck, to put a girdle round the earth in forty minutes for you. When all this is remembered, it ceases to be wonderful that even our poor table is covered with representatives of every order. More, we fear, than in this month we can deal with. The season, however, directs the eye. One of the sweetest and most acceptable gift books we have seen is, *Hymns of Faith and Hope. By Horatius Bonar, D.D. New Edition.* (James Nisbet and Co.)—Last month, we called the attention of our readers to the third series of these delightful notes of evangelical melody. We have so often expressed a loving appreciation of their animation, helpfulness, and beauty, that we need do no more now than say, this edition comprises the three series. Every page softly illuminated; the illuminations of a very quiet, expressive grace, quite in harmony with the notes of the poet. We are glad to see the three volumes thus gathered into one. To a large circle, this will be not only

an acceptable present, but a volume easy of access, often sending words and impressions of cheerfulness into the darkness of lonely hours, sick chambers. Dr. Bonar's hymns are beyond almost any of modern times we know. Songs for the night, in which the soul keeps its holy solemnity.

SOME two years since we called the attention of our readers to the unity of the popular tale; than this, we believe, there is not a more marvellous and interesting feature of the Folk Lore of all nations; perhaps not a more subtle question in connection with the problems of philology; the profound lectures of Max Müller, on language, have thrown some light on these strange correlations; especially the second volume furnishes some singular illustrations of that apparently remarkable law of the human mind, by which the like stories seem to be reproduced in all ages, especially among primeval and emotional people. Mr. Baring-Gould has a singular affection for the hidden repositories of antique, mediæval, or legendary tales; and, if the nature of his mind do not seem to give to him the means of laying his finger on the unicising law; he certainly furnishes his readers with a variety of curious, entertaining, and, alike to scholars and general readers, interesting particulars: this was the character of that which we may call a dreadfully curious book. *The Book of Were-Wolves: being an Account of a terrible superstition.* By Sabine Baring-Gould, M.A. (Smith, Elder, & Co.). He has carried his researches and speculations forward in *Curious Myths of the Middle Ages*, by S. Baring-Gould, M.A. (Rivingtons), and given the historical development and national variations of a number of these myths. The interest of the book may be gathered, when we mention the myths of which it treats: such as the fatality of numbers; the man in the moon; the divining rod; the seven sleepers; tailed men; the dog Gelert; Antichrist and Pope Joan; William Tell; the Mountain of Venus; Prester John; the Wandering Jew; &c., &c. Mr. Baring-Gould has an illimitable faith—he believes in the Wandering Jew—he rightly designates it as “the most thrilling of all mediæval myths, if a myth, for who can say for certain that it is not true?” “Verily, I say unto you, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom,” are our Lord's words, which I can hardly think apply to the destruction of Jerusalem. We are amazed at the writer's lack of interpretative means; but that need not detain us now. He recites this and other stories with an almost thrill-

ling reality of interest. The abundance of his faith reminds us, with reference to himself, of his own remarks upon "the fatal number, thirteen, at dinner-table;" because there were thirteen at the table when the Last Supper was celebrated, and one of the number betrayed his master, and then hung himself; it is looked upon as unlucky to sit down thirteen at table, the consequence being that one will die before the year is out. "When I see," says Vourenargues, "men of genius, not daring to sit down thirteen at table, there is no error, ancient or modern, which astonishes me;" but Mr. Baring-Gould produces a number of instances of the fatality of numbers; and if they imply his faith, they certainly furnish thoughtful people with perplexity. It is very easy to use the word "coincidence;" but what is coincidence? Perhaps the hidden unsolved law of number; yet, because a like circumstance to a modern incident may be detected in some far-away ancient Hindoo tradition, it surely does not disprove its recurrence. Nobody can walk through the town of Altdorf, and doubt the existence of William Tell, or the truth of the tradition of the apple. Then the question arises, for which our writer furnishes illustrations but no solutions—What is a myth? What are its generations? From what law of the human mind does it originate? It is, perhaps, easier to see how it perpetuates itself. To our own country, remarkably curious and entertaining, is *Notes on the Folk Lore of the Northern Counties of England and the Borders*. By William Henderson, with an appendix on Household Stories by S. Baring-Gould, M.A. (Longmans). To this volume Mr. Baring-Gould also furnishes some of the most curious particulars, especially the appendix, in which he has reduced stories to their radicals, and run them through a remarkable range of cycles. The book itself reflects great credit on Mr. Henderson's industry and breadth of enquiry: it is one of the most complete volumes on the subject, referring to our own national folk-lore, we have received as yet; but Mr. Baring-Gould was helping forward, in quite a congenial study, when he threw in his treasury of notes to the stock of stories. For ourselves, we cannot but confess astonishment at the number of queer traditions and old world superstitious usages he has run up against in the course of his wanderings; but this also is coincidence; and a man's taste and temperament, like a peculiar appetite, finds its own food. A number of instances are introduced, as the following:—

I have often observed in the Weald of Sussex dead horses or calves hung up by the four legs to the horizontal branch of a tree. It is a



sufficiently ghastly sight. A magnificent elm in Westmeston, just under the Ditchling Beacon, was constantly loaded with dead animals: one spring I saw two horses and three calves. I never could ascertain the reason of this strange custom, further than that it was thought lucky for the cattle. I have no doubt myself that they were a sacrifice to Odin, hanging being the manner in which offerings were made to him. Odin himself on one occasion is said to have hung between heaven and earth. It was customary for the ancient Germanic tribes to hang upon trees the heads of the horses which had been killed in battle, as offerings to the god. When Cæcina visited the scene of Varian's overthrow (A.D. 15), he saw horses' heads hanging to the trees in the neighbourhood of the altars, where the Roman tribunes and centurions had been slaughtered.

This volume deals with the simpler household stories, which many of us suppose education has entirely routed and put to flight; until, upon enquiry, we find that in many districts superstitions abound still, although men and women are ashamed to confess how much they are the subjects of them. We suppose everywhere there is a tendency to connect the past and present external nature with the history and destiny of man; but some of the myths of the middle ages have a thrilling grandeur of conception about them, arising chiefly, we suppose, from man's sense of his illimitable destiny. Speaking of the "Wandering Jew," Mr. Baring-Gould says:—

As a myth, its roots lie in that great mystery of human life which is an enigma never solved, and ever originating speculation.

What was life? was it of necessity limited to fourscore years, or could it be extended indefinitely? were questions curious minds never wearied of asking. And so the mythology of the past teemed with legends of favoured or accursed mortals, who had reached beyond the term of days set to most men. Some had discovered the water of life, the fountain of perpetual youth, and were ever renewing their strength. Others had dared the power of God, and were therefore sentenced to feel the weight of His displeasure, without tasting the repose of death.

John the Divine slept at Ephesus, untouched by corruption, with the ground heaving over his breast as he breathed, waiting the summons to come forth and witness against Antichrist. The seven sleepers reposed in a cave, and centuries glided by like a watch in the night. The monk of Hildesheim, doubting how with God a thousand years could be as yesterday, listened to the melody of a bird in the green wood during three minutes, and found that in three minutes three hundred years had flown. Joseph of Arimathæa, in the blessed city of Sarras, draws perpetual life from the Saint Graal; Merlin sleeps and sighs in an old tree, spell-bound of Vivien. Charlemagne and Barbarossa wait, crowned and armed, in the heart of the mountain, till the time comes for the release of Fatherland from despotism. And, on the other hand, the curse of a

deathless life has passed on the Wild Huntsman, because he desired to chase the red-deer for evermore; on the Captain of the Phantom Ship, because he vowed he would double the Cape whether God willed it or not; on the Man in the Moon, because he gathered sticks during the Sabbath rest; on the dancers of Kolbeck, because they desired to spend eternity in their mad gambols.

If the legend of the "Wandering Jew" be the most thrilling and sublime, that of "Tanhäuser" is the most enchanting and beautiful; universally as it is known, we shall quote Mr. Baring-Gould's beautiful version of it. It seems the radical of that long range of stories, of which we have popular versions in Washington Irving's "Rip Van Winkle," and Browning's "Pied Piper of Hamelin," in the almost as well-known adventures of "Thomas of Ercildonne." A world underground; a spirit caught away, and living on a preternatural life, while all its old worlds transpire and change. The quotation is lengthy, but it furnishes a good illustration of the interesting way in which Mr. Baring-Gould recites his myths:—

And now for the story of Tanhäuser.

A French knight was riding over the beauteous meadows in the Hörsel vale on his way to Wartburg, where the Landgrave Hermann was holding a gathering of minstrels, who were to contend in song for a prize.

Tanhäuser was a famous minnesinger, and all his lays were of love and of women, for his heart was full of passion, and that not of the purest and noblest description.

It was towards dusk that he passed the cliff in which is the Hörselloch, and as he rode by, he saw a white glimmering figure of matchless beauty standing before him, and beckoning him to her. He knew her at once, by her attributes and by her superhuman perfection, to be none other than Venus. As she spake to him, the sweetest strains of music floated in the air, a soft roseate light glowed around her, and nymphs of exquisite loveliness scattered roses at her feet. A thrill of passion ran through the veins of the minnesinger; and, leaving his horse, he followed the apparition. It led him up the mountain to the cave, and as it went flowers bloomed upon the soil, and a radiant track was left for Tanhäuser to follow. He entered the cavern, and descended to the palace of Venus in the heart of the mountain.

Seven years of revelry and debauch were passed, and the minstrel's heart began to feel a strange void. The beauty, the magnificence, the variety of the scenes in the pagan goddess's home, and all its heathenish pleasures, palled upon him, and he yearned for the pure fresh breezes of earth, one look up at the dark night sky spangled with stars, one glimpse of simple mountain-flowers, one tinkle of sheep-bells. At the same time his conscience began to reproach him, and he longed to make his peace with God. In vain did he entreat Venus to permit him to

depart, and it was only when in the bitterness of his grief he called upon the Virgin-Mother, that a rift in the mountain-side appeared to him, and he stood again above ground.

How sweet was the morning air, balmy with the scent of hay, as it rolled up the mountain to him and fanned his haggard cheek! How delightful to him was the cushion of moss and scanty grass after the downy couches of the palace of revelry below! He plucked the little heather-bells and held them before him; the tears rolled from his eyes, and moistened his thin and wasted hands. He looked up at the soft blue sky and the newly-risen sun, and his heart overflowed. What were the golden, jewel-incrusted, lamp-lit vaults beneath to that pure dome of God's building!

The chime of a village church struck sweetly on his ear, satiated with Bacchanalian songs; and he hurried down the mountain to the church which called him. There he made his confession, but the priest, horror-struck at his recital, dared not give him absolution, but passed him on to another. And so he went from one to another, till at last he was referred to the Pope himself. To the Pope he went. Urban IV. then occupied the chair of S. Peter. To him Tanhäuser related the sickening story of his guilt, and prayed for absolution. Urban was a hard and stern man, and shocked at the immensity of the sin, he thrust the penitent indignantly from him, exclaiming, "Guilt such as thine can never, never be remitted. Sooner shall this staff in my hand grow green and blossom, than that God should pardon thee!"

Then Tanhäuser, full of despair, and with his soul darkened, went away, and returned to the only asylum open to him, the Venusberg. But lo! three days after he had gone, Urban discovered that his pastoral staff had put forth buds, and had burst into flower. Then he sent messengers after Tanhäuser, and they reached the Hörsel vale to hear that a wayworn man, with haggard brow and bowed head, had just entered the Hörselloch. Since then Tanhäuser has not been seen.

Such is the sad yet beautiful story of Tanhäuser. It is a very ancient myth Christianized, a wide-spread tradition localized. Originally heathen, it has been transformed, and has acquired new beauty by an infusion of Christianity. Scattered over Europe, it exists in various forms, but in none so graceful as that attached to the Hörselberg. There are, however, other Venusbergs in Germany: as, for instance, in Swabia, near Waldsee; another near Ufhausen, at no great distance from Friburg (the same story is told of this Venusberg as of the Hörselberg); in Saxony there is a Venusberg not far from Wolkenstein. Paracelsus speaks of a Venusberg in Italy, referring to that in which Æneas Sylvius (Ep. 16) says Venus or a Sibyl resides, occupying a cavern, and assuming once a week the form of a serpent. Geiler v. Keyzersperg, a quaint old preacher of the fifteenth century, speaks of the witches assembling on the Venusberg.

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What may have been the significance of the primeval story-radical it is impossible for us now to ascertain; but the legend, as it shaped itself



in the Middle Ages, is certainly indicative of the struggle between the new and the old faith.

We see thinly veiled in Tanhäuser, the story of a man, Christian in name, but heathen at heart, allured by the attractions of paganism, which seems to satisfy his poetic instincts, and which gives full rein to his passions. But these excesses pall on him after a while, and the religion of sensuality leaves a great void in his breast.

He turns to Christianity, and at first it seems to promise all that he requires. But alas! he is repelled by its ministers. On all sides he is met by practice widely at variance with profession. Pride, worldliness, want of sympathy exist among those who should be the foremost to guide, sustain, and receive him. All the warm springs which gushed up in his broken heart are choked, his softened spirit is hardened again, and he returns in despair to bury his sorrows, and drown his anxieties, in the debauchery of his former creed.

A sad picture, but doubtless one very true.

In conclusion, we shall be thankful to Mr. Baring-Gould if he turn over and correlate other stories. In some of these he has so concisely dealt with, we wonder that he did not touch on some traditions lying by their side, such as "The Great Country of the River of Sabbatjou. But the Jews and Talmud treatises would furnish a world of curious matter he seems not have touched yet; and with us, "St. George and the Dragon," a myth whose radical and cycles have not been, we believe, hitherto very clearly traced. Of course, Gibbon goes for nothing in that elucidation.

**A** DELIGHTFUL, and yet gorgeous drawing-room volume is, *Touches of Nature. By Eminent Artists and Authors.* (Alexander Strahan.)—Very sweet, for the most part, very expressive, wood engravings; passages of letter-press, admirably short, yet not less beautiful and complete than pithy, in which the reader will find himself in company with some of the best writers, listening to some of their best words in poetry and in prose. George MacDonald, Jean Ingelow, Christina Rossette, Dora Greenwell, Jeremiah Gotthelf, the Countess de Gasparin, and a number of equal eminence beyond our power to enumerate. The volume has the outer charm of exceeding attractiveness, and the inner, of delightful readableness, in which the imagination is struck and the attention never overstrained; which are, we suppose, the great essentials of a volume for the drawing-room table.

**A** PILE of really good books for the young folks. A beautiful story, with no great variety in the incident, and presenting no very extraordinary pictures to the imagination, but told with

great pathos, is *Christie Redfern's Troubles*. (Religious Tract Society.)—It is an American story, but told by somebody who has not lost the charm of the Scotch dialect; it is published simultaneously in England and America, and we cannot doubt will find favour in both countries; it has not those great needs for some young story-readers, wildness and adventure; it is a story of household life, homely sorrows,—how a young mind was brought to its Saviour, and the natural difficulties which gathered round it, making its course not easy, and yet helping it to win its crown; but it is in no respect an ordinary book.

IF we put *Christie Redfern* into the hands of an earnest-hearted young girl, we would put *The Chronicles of an Old Manor House. In Three Parts. By George E. Sargent*. (Religious Tract Society)—into the hands of an earnest-hearted lad. The Old Manor House, with its manifold family adventures, stands out to us stereoscoped from the times of Henry the Eighth, and Queen Mary—the days of the Martyrs; although the third part carries us on thirty years afterwards to the time of the triumph of truth, and the defeat of the Spanish Armada. The story is told with a great deal of vigour. The author carries his heroes through considerable adventures and scenes, in which the life of the times seems to be well preserved and fairly realised. And, to the same order of books, historical incident in the life of the church, vested in pleasing fiction, and made perceptible, readable and loveable, is *The Dark Year of Dundee. A Tale of the Scottish Reformation*. (T. Nelson and Sons.)—It is, as the title implies, a Scotch story, of the times of the first Reformation in Scotland—Dundee in 1544. Scotch scenes and character seem to be preserved with pleasing distinctness; and the story itself, we are persuaded, cannot be read without pleasure; it has excitement and tenderness, and the pleasant Scotch language is rendered with pathos and humour, so as only a Scotchman could render it. It is a very beautiful story and book.

THE author of *The Gayworthys* is rather careless of her reputation; that book exhibited great freshness and power, genius and usefulness in singularly happy combination. *Faith Gartney's Girlhood* was understood to be an earlier production of her pen. Of *A Summer in Leslie Goldthwaite's Life. By the Author of Faith Gartney's Girlhood, &c.* (Sampson Low and Son)—The chief remark we have to make is, that it is not written as the author of *The Gayworthys* can write. Of course there are sharp touches of character; bright little tinted domestic pictures, touches of rural colouring; and it is a book which may confidently be put

into the hands of young folks, as even in some points delightfully written, and full of pure teaching; only it is not the book the author of *The Gayworthys* could write. We ask from that author the devotion of her powers to a work with a great purpose; the work done by the *Summer in Leslie Goldthwaite's Life* may be done by many, but the writer has powers and facilities of genius which can be commanded but by few.

“A. L. O. E.” A batch of books is before us from this prolific and most useful pen. To describe one of A. L. O. E.'s books is very much to describe them all. We do not mean that they have not variety, distinction of incident, and real freeness of spirit; but they are all pervaded by one mind and intention. A. L. O. E. writes for the young, writes to interest in the truths of religion, and to excite young minds to a religious life. There ought not to be a Sunday school library in the country, of any denomination interested in preserving the truth and the atonement as set forth in the Saviour, in which these volumes might not be found. They are eminently good; the words are clear; the pictures homely; the author is fond of taking some ancient Bible incident, and running it along by some modern analogue and illustration. Thus, *The Triumph over Midian*. By A. L. O. E. (T. Nelson and Sons.)—the old story of those who out of weakness were made strong, and waxed valiant in fight, derives from this pen, if not new, yet fresh tints of meaning. *The Sunday Chaplet of Stories*. By A. L. O. E. (T. Nelson and Sons), and the *Holiday Chaplet of Stories*. By A. L. O. E. (T. Nelson and Sons)—are told in a different, less elaborate, more simple and broken manner; but they are not less than really, as they are simply beautiful. They may be read aloud to the little circle by the fireside, or the young one may carry the story away, and spell out the meaning by himself—or the Sunday-school teacher may find in each piece a capital text for a Sunday afternoon's address—and for ourselves, we have not turned over the pages of incident without feeling that many old truths are very prettily put. With these, as belonging to the same department, we may mention *The Children's Treasury*. *New Stories*. By A. L. O. E. (T. Nelson and Sons)—and with the same hearty commendation. Also, *Zaida's Nursery Note-book*. *For the use of Mothers*. By A. L. O. E. (T. Nelson and Sons)—To those readers who are fond of selections of the best words of the greatest authors—and such volumes are light and truth packed up in small compass, and in a variety of settings for travellers' portmanteaus, and pedestrians' pockets—such volumes as *The Treasure Book of Devotional Reading*. Edited by Benjamin Orme, M.A. (Strahan)



—and *Words Old and New, or Gems from the Christian Authorship of all Ages*. Selected by Horatius Bonar, D.D. (Nisbet and Co.)—Mr. Orme's gives, perhaps, the larger circle of selections; Dr. Bonar's, the closest adherence to a purposed distinctness of evangelical sentiment. They are both beautiful volumes, characterised by judiciousness of selection; and he who possesses the one, will not find that he has a book too many, should he be presented with the other.

A BEAUTIFUL book is *Animal Sagacity*. Edited by Mrs. S. C. Hall. (S. W. Partridge.) It has a copious amplitude of illustration, and its illustrations are very good. A volume of well-selected anecdote, which, while it pleases the young people, will move them to respect as well as wonder at the marvellous wisdom shining through the instincts of the lower orders of animal creation.

ELIHU BURRITT comes before us once more in *The Mission of Great Sufferings*. By Elihu Burritt. (Sampson Low & Sons.) A wise little book, but not with the delightful beauty of the two volumes of his pedestrian excursions. Suffering is always a mystery; and we do not know that, when a nation is plunged in mourning, the mystery is greater to the thoughtful mind than when darkness and grief pervade a household. There is no doubt a Divine law pervading the larger and the lesser area of sorrow. We wish our excellent writer had travelled a little further; and still more, attempted a sort of north-west passage through these Arctic regions and seas; for we cannot but feel how large a mass of suffering is preventable, and how man reflects on God the consequences of his own guilty selfishness and procrastination. Sufferings have no doubt a wondrously recuperative power; and usually, when they appear on a great scale, they seem to be themselves a voice crying in the wilderness, a commanding appeal for the reparation of great wrongs. We could wish that Elihu Burritt had travelled in a larger circle for his illustrations. As an American, it was most natural that he should be profoundly affected by the recent crisis through which his country has passed. Mr. Burritt, it is known, writes with great eloquence; in this book his eloquence is more rhetorical than in those which have recently come before us; but a favourable illustration of the style and intention of the paper may be given in the following extract:—

The community of great sufferings, the attraction of great sufferings, the influence of great sufferings, the moral productions of great

sufferings:—all these forces and conditions were included in the Saviour's being made perfect for His mission by His sublime Passion on the cross. "If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me." Here are both the community and attraction of suffering. The community, who can measure it? Not the angel John saw flying through the midst of heaven with a reed in his hand. Not with that reed, for it were too short. Not with a shorter measure than the diameter of the whole world-strewn creation. The attraction:—"If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me." How they resisted! How great pagan nations linked their bucklers, locked their arms, and pulled backward with all the blind forces of their boasted civilization! What heaving, riving, and writhing in the world's moral structures, when its old religions were torn up by the roots of their superstition, by the attraction of that tree on which He was lifted up! How that attraction reaches outward, further and further from year to year, until it touches already nearly every point in the circumference of humanity! What is the power? It is Immanuel—*God with us*. It is more; it is Immanueloni, —*God with us suffering*; Immanuel in the deepest experience of human pain and sorrow. In this is the hiding of that power that regenerates men, transforms nations, and draws unto Himself for shaping the principalities and powers of the world we inhabit. Whatever Paul beheld, when, caught up to the third heaven, he saw and heard things unutterable to his lips, his thought climbed to no loftier height of mystery or might than this divine community of human experience,—*God with us suffering*. To be "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," and to be touched with it on the great white throne of His glory; to retain the sense and sensibilities of our humanity as freshly at the end of all earth's ages as when He went up to His Father with the nail-prints but a few days old in His hands; to permeate the whole Divine Godhead with the veins and pulses of the everlasting sentiment of our human nature, so that the quivering heart-strings of our secret and lowly sorrows, of our human sufferings, may touch a fellow-feeling in the bosom of the Eternal Father as well as Son; that our wearinesses and weaknesses, the pining sicknesses of our grief-blinded hopes and faiths may reach and stir the sympathy of His heart through all the intervening hosts of bright angels who never wept; that the very tears we drop at the graves of our loved ones may, as it were, bedew His throne and mirror their sacred moisture in the brightness of His countenance; this is the mightiest mystery in the great arcana of His being and attributes. Neither Paul, in the revelations and raptures of that vision he saw in the body or out of the body, nor Gabriel, nor higher angel if there be, ever caught, at his loftiest soaring, the glimpse of a greater wonder than this.

"Who never wept." What right have you to say that of the angels? None; I own it; none in revelation, none in reason, none in anything except a spontaneous and universal idea. On the strength of that idea alone, I know one should say or believe with diffidence that there is a being in Heaven, "lessening down from Infinite Perfection," who has been left outside the great and holy community of

this sentiment of humanity by the original or subsequent conditions of his existence.

IN addition to the serials to which we gave words of warm commendation last month, we must not fail, at a time when heads of families are revising their periodicals, to mention some which are still lying on our table. Amongst the most unexceptionable for Sabbath family reading, is *The Family Treasury of Sunday Reading*, edited by the Rev. Andrew Cameron (Nelson and Sons); beautifully illustrated. In this volume we have "The Draytons and the Davenants," and "The Dark Year of Dundee," among its stories; and papers, in series, from the pens of the Rev. William Arnott and the Rev. Professor Porter, and many other equally interesting names. There is a rich variety of interest in the biographic sketches, in the poetry, in the descriptive sketches of the Holy Land, in the serious but not less interesting tales. We commend it warmly to all Christian households—and with it, equally deserving of affectionate greeting, *The Christian Treasury* (Johnstone and Hunter). It is a variety of the same order as the last; it is pervaded by faithfulness to evangelical truth; and it will, by its various pages, assist those whose Sabbaths are confined, either in whole or part, to the sick room, to the farm-house ingle, or to the lone city lodging, to "call the Sabbath a delight." Of children's periodicals, among the most profusely illustrated, and illustrations as pretty, and beautiful, and profuse, with letter-press to match, we may mention *The Children's Paper* (T. Nelson and Sons), and *The Children's Prize*, edited by J. Erskine Clarke, M.A. (William Macintosh); and with these *The Child's Companion and Juvenile Instructor* (Religious Tract Society). It is needless to vary our words of praise, they are all beautiful, all good.

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THE IMMORALITIES  
OF  
RELIGIOUS CRITICISM ;

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR OF THE  
"ECLECTIC REVIEW."

BY  
HENRY DUNN.

LONDON :  
SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, AND CO., STATIONERS' HALL COURT.  
*Price Sixpence.*

*The Book to which the following Letter refers is entitled "ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY:—IS IT OF MAN OR OF GOD?" By the author of "The Destiny of the Human Race," and consists of 194 pp. post 8vo. The Publishers are Simpkin, Marshall, and Co., Stationers' Hall-court, London. It may be had for a Shilling, of any Bookseller in Town or Country.*

## A LETTER, &c.

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SIR,

It has sometimes been questioned whether or no, on the whole, our so-called religious periodicals do more good or harm to the cause they are intended to promote. Few, I suppose, will dispute that they must be injurious rather than beneficial whenever they become remarkable by the absence of such essentially Christian characteristics as justice, candour, and truth. Yet this is the present condition of the "Eclectic Review."

The particular article\* which has called forth this letter is, in every way, a singular one. I scarcely know what terms to use in characterizing its assertions. Were I to speak of them merely as misrepresentations, the real character of the passages to which I am about to refer would not be fairly expressed, for they are *much more* than this. If I call them falsehoods I use a word which is, I know, justly regarded as offensive. I am, however, compelled to do so. By no other name is it possible rightly to designate statements which are (I say it without attributing any evil motive), both in letter and in spirit, *utterly and absolutely untrue*.

I cannot render these misstatements more obvious than by placing together in each case, as I now proceed to do, the Falsehood and the Fact,—your random assertion, and the voice of the book itself.

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\* "A Plea for the Disorganization of Christianity." Art. vii. Nov. 1866



The random assertion :—

“The writer would have all churches broken up, dissolved and scattered, and *individualism solitary and alone* exercise its influence.”—(*E. R.* p. 439.)

The voice of the book :—

“It is every way most *undesirable* to become isolated, and by any step, however conscientiously it may be taken, to disable ourselves from acting with bodies of Christian men, whom we cannot but love.”—(*O. C.*, p. 167.)

“True Christian communion is one of the most pressing wants of the human spirit. We all need to be refreshed and enriched by others—to be quickened by something that is not within ourselves. Heart must act on heart, and life on life. The *religious poor* especially need spiritual sympathy to make up for the want of that ordinary intercourse with educated Christians which is hindered by the artificial distinctions of civilized life. In a true Church-life alone can this be had ; for, as it has been truly observed, “the Christian belongs to a kingdom in which there is nothing unrelated. *There no man liveth and no man dieth to himself.*”—(*O. C.*, p. 106.)

“Surely we have our model, if anywhere, in the Primitive Church—established, as it was, by inspired men, and declared to be ‘the body of Christ,’ the ‘communion of saints,’ the ‘light of the world,’ the witness-bearing society, distinguished chiefly by its meekness and patience, its purity and brotherly love. Here we come, I imagine, as near to the *beau ideal* of the Church in all ages as we are likely to do, and have little more to learn as to its teaching and government than is presented to us in Scripture.”—(*O. C.*, p. 113.)

“National as well as voluntary churches have each achieved the ends for which they were adapted ; every sect and party without exception has, in its degree, helped to elevate public opinion, to improve the condition of humanity, to dignify life, to repress crime, and to promote virtue.”—(*O. C.*, p. 46.)

In addition to the foregoing, an entire chapter (viii.) is devoted to “the Ministry of the Church.”

The random assertion :—

“It (Organized Christianity) is a plea for reducing Church life, not only to the merest minimum of communion, but a communion in which all the members shall *know each other's individuality*, and find that individuality shaped *exactly to the same narrow pattern* of idea and experience.”—(*E. R.*, p. 439.)

The voice of the book :—

“To attempt to base (Communion) on common opinions is absurd ; to regard it as consisting in the recital of experiences, or as developing itself under regulations of a more or less inquisitorial kind, is to mistake altogether its true character.”—(*O. C.*, p. 107.)

“The very attempt to give evidence to others of spiritual life leads, almost of necessity, to a constraint and self-consciousness which is anything but wholesome ; it occasions *danger*, were it only from the fact that a candidate for admission almost always imagines that a certain standard of feeling must be maintained whether natural or not ; that wherever there is stimulus or pressure there is sure to be collapse ; and that whatever lays stress on a particular order of thought and feeling ‘casts the heart too much on itself,’ and in so doing leads it away from Christ.

“Nor is this all. Any attempt to be spiritual *up to a certain standard*, supposed to be attained by a given religious body, endangers sincerity and promotes doubt. Artificial stimulants are in such a case almost always employed, and the result, even when there is no hypocrisy, is to produce a state of mind under which the soul narrows and withers.”—(*O. C.*, pp. 120—1.)

“Our spiritual life is to be quickened and strengthened by intercourse with those who are better and stronger than ourselves, while we in turn are to render to fellow-Christians, and especially to the young and inexperienced, all that help, both material and moral, which is implied in the apostolic command, ‘Bear ye one another’s burdens.’”—(*O. C.*, p. 106.)

The random assertion :—

“What will *our author’s sect* be but a narrow Pharasaic cluster of people, with heads erect in spiritual pride, affecting pity, and feeling real indifference to the perishing world without the little sect or sects he would create ?”—(*E. R.*, p. 443.)

The voice of the book :—

“It is a mercy for which we can never be too thankful that separations, *as such*, can never be more than partial, and rarely other than sectarian ; that individualism, however valuable in correcting popular opinions, or in laying bare cherished evils, can build no temple to its own glory, or sever Christian from Christian without finding its punishment in its sin.”—(*O. C.*, p. 191.)

“Perhaps all that can be done *at present* is to endeavour to excite a *willingness* to investigate ; to enkindle, if it be possible, a disposition *to inquire*, not for what may be considered as most expedient, but for what is true ; not for what may be regarded as most

practicable, but for what God has sanctioned ; to inquire, not in the hope of being able to graft here or there, on the old stock, some new device or other, but simply to ascertain what is right, and, when this is ascertained, to spread such conviction without reference *as yet* to anything beyond the propagation of true thought, since in no other way but by the growth of true thought can the interests of godliness ever be permanently advanced.

“ All *hasty* procedures in what is called a practical direction are both unpractical and evil, since they commonly proceed either from impatience or self-will. Not till right ideas have made considerable way, not till an atmosphere has been created in which new practices will work healthily, is it either wise or right to attempt their introduction. ‘ Few persons, however,’—as has been well said by Mr. Matthew Arnold, in his admirable essay ‘ On the Functions of Criticism,’—‘ and very few Englishmen indeed, can understand or appreciate such a course. The cry of the present day on all hands is CONSTRUCT. They who join in this cry forget that, for construction, ‘ two powers must concur—the power of the man, and the power of the moment.’ He who is destined in the long run to accomplish most in the correction of the evils which now oppress us, is the man who is most willing to wait for suitable materials before he begins to build, or, if needful, to provide them for others ; who is able to hold a truth firmly without seeking to revolutionize the world with it ; who is content to handle it *disinterestedly*, and without reference to any party objects whatever ; who steadily refuses to lend himself to ulterior considerations ; whose aim is first to know the best that can be known, and then to create, by the agency of this knowledge, a current of true and fresh ideas ; the man, above all, who never ceases to protest with all his might against whatever makes truth subserve interests not its own ; whatever stifles it with practical considerations ; whatever makes practical ends the first thing, and true thought the second thing.’ If we are honest in such a course, we shall neither be deterred from investigation, nor turn away in despondency, because the path we have to pursue may be strewn with the wrecks or whitened by the bones of previous explorers.”—(*O. C.*, pp. 174—175.)

The random assertion :—

“ The work of evangelization was all done and finished in the days of the Apostles ; so to attempt to convert mankind must be synonymous with persecution.”—(*E. R.*, p. 440.)

“ The savage is to seek civilization ; the convict and the thief are to be self-transformed ; the child to be self-educated ; the depraved self-governed. He proclaims the doctrine of ‘ limitation as opposed to universality.’ This was the mark of Judaism—it is the mark of



Christianity also:—"We are Christians, you are not; on the contrary, we know you well; you are lost souls—heirs of wrath; but help yourselves, and God help you; for us, we have no commission to pray for you, to preach to you, or to enlighten you; out of your way we get; you poor and wretched, sick and sore; we belong to the order of the Levites, who beheld, we know, the distressed, and "passed by on the other side." This is the cheerful doctrine of this precious bijou."—(*E. R.*, p. 441.)

The voice of the book:—

"The glad tidings should be declared in every nation 'for a witness' (Matt. xxiv. 14), the wall of partition between Jew and Gentile being now broken down, and all the world made one in Christ."—(*O. C.*, p. 8.)

"Whatever obligation may rest upon any of us—minister or layman—to spread the glad tidings of redemption,—and I should be the last to deny such an obligation,—it seems clear enough that *this particular command*, as given by our Lord, cannot be separated from the promise by which it was accompanied."—(*O. C.*, p. 6.)

"A believer will not only accept the Gospel, he will both live and teach it, even at a cost few in this generation seem disposed to pay,—the cost of time now devoted to business. No man can, properly speaking, be a disciple of Christ who does not learn *in order that he may teach*;—not perhaps publicly, for few are called to this duty, but at least individually and socially,—in the family, in limited circles, in private conversation, and this on the ground that, being a Christian, he is *an appointed conservator of truth*."—(*O. C.*, p. 145.)

"*Being* what we ought to be, there will be little danger of our failing to do what we are called upon to perform."—(*O. C.*, p. 181.)

"We shall be neither less earnest, nor, I trust, less successful in our endeavours to extend the knowledge of Christ, whether at home or abroad. But we shall proceed on somewhat different principles from those which now largely animate us. We shall sow the good seed more zealously than ever, but we shall be less restless about results. We shall learn not only when to speak, but when to be silent; not only when to work, but when to refrain from working; when, in short, to retire, that God may more manifestly come upon the scene."—(*O. C.*, p. 89.)

"An entire chapter (vii.) is, in addition, devoted to 'the Preacher of the Gospel,' a duty always regarded as ever pressing."

The random assertion:—

"Wretched—pre-eminently wretched—is all this narrow-mindedness—this perpetually thinking of *my* soul—the sure sign of bad

spiritual health. The man who is ever talking of *my* stomach—‘*my* digestion,’ his conversation is not entertaining. *This is what the writer means* by the perfecting of the few—certainly, it will have one result, and it will be to him a gratifying note of praise; ‘Lord, I have been honoured to do very little good in the world! I have had too many whims and notions, and crochets in my head for that; but I am thankful that in these, my declining days, my powers are being used to *prevent* the good that others might do! I am thankful that I infected old Wright with doubt, and he has taken off his guinea from the Missionary Society. I stopped young Wilson as he was starting off to persuade an unbeliever to think of Christ. I am glad I have quite put a spoke in Mary’s teaching in the Sunday-school, and I believe we shall hear no more about Bible Societies in my neighbourhood. Come, come, these things make a man look up. I am not without some influence after all.’ Does all this sound very severe? but *this is the very intention of the writer*, and these are the things for which he might offer up his psalm of praise.”

“Missionary organizations he dreads and despises. ‘Hath a nation changed its gods’ at any time after this fashion? We believe never. The Gospel, like civilisation, is a light which must be carried to be known. It is amusing to read this dreaming apology for human indolence and inaction hiding itself beneath the subterfuge that the Christian, like the Israelite, is not to preach the truth but to live it—to be an attractive, but not an aggressive, missionary.”—(*E.R.*, p. 441.)

“The cry of the book before us: ‘*Let us sleep as do others.*’ Of the personal excellence of the author, although we have no knowledge of him, we do not entertain a doubt; but a more thorough-going piece of Antinomian heresy, we have not for a long time read or seen.”—(*E. R.*, p. 446.)

### The voice of the book :—

“The individual believer who listens to the voice of Christ must, at whatever cost, ‘look not on his own things only, but on the things of others;’ he must do unto others as he would that they, if he were in their circumstances, should do unto him; he must put his shoulders under another’s burdens, and he must bear (suffer by) the infirmities of the weak.”—(*O. C.*, p. 165.)

“But let them not imagine that those who adopt other views, and who strive rather after the Christian perfection of the few than the general improvement of the many, *therefore* do nothing for society at large. This is not the fact; for it is unquestionable that all the *secondary influences* of Christianity depend for their force much more on the influence of individual example than either on religious rites or

public teaching. The performance of rites may be, and frequently is, but a cloak to hypocrisy. Teaching, however good, too generally resembles the action of the sun on desert plains, it falls on unpropitious soil. But the influence of example, if it acts at all, is not only in itself quickening and life-giving, *it suggests the source from whence all that is good proceeds.*"—(*O. C.*, p. 110.)

What is really meant by "the perfecting of the few" cannot, perhaps, be better illustrated than by the following quotation from a letter written by Archbishop Whately to a young clergyman:—

"Do not begin," he says, "by devoting your chief attention to those who seem to want reformation most: select the best informed and best disposed—improve *these*, and use them as your instruments in reforming their neighbours. If you had a promiscuous pile of wood to kindle, where would you apply your light, to the green sticks or to the dry?"—(*Life and Corr.*, vol. i.)

The principle laid down by the Archbishop is precisely that on which God governs the world; and the non-recognition of it is one main cause of the darkness which so often seems to rest on the dealings of Providence with mankind.

The random assertion:—

"We have remarked how easily the author leaps over Scripture, or breaks it up to serve his own purposes of interpretation when it stands in his way. We could scarcely have expected that the denunciations against the prophets in Scripture, would be turned to account for the purpose of denouncing an order of ministers altogether."—(*E. R.*, p. 444.)

The voice of the book:—The false prophets are *not* turned to any such account. What is really said is this:—"There is nothing whatever to shew that these (the schools of the prophets) were ever intended to be models for a New Testament ministry."

Ministers are *nowhere* denounced. These are the words of the author:—

"I most heartily echo the statement that neither clergymen nor Dissenting ministers are, as a body, by any means chargeable with



unfaithfulness. I believe that there never was a time when preachers were, as a rule, more earnest, more devoted, or better qualified for their work than they are now.

"It may be, as has been suggested, that the minister often 'wants faith' in the possibility of elevating the character of his people. It may be that, 'when face to face with hundreds of souls whose failures and weaknesses and dangers appeal to him for help,' he sometimes fails, in the brief period that is allotted to him, 'to bring out the meaning of the Divine word;' to 'carry it home as spirit and life' to the consciences of his hearers; to 'show a due regard to the range and comparative worth of motives;' to 'guide the formation and growth of Christian character;' to 'treat with sufficient frequency and fulness and explicitness of the moral dispositions and habits,' or to give adequate directions for the use of recognized means of spiritual 'improvement.' But all this is merely to say that he cannot perform impossibilities,—that it is folly to ask for services which no human being, under the circumstances, can render."—(*O. C.*, pp. 74, 75.)

"What we really want in a pastor is, '*a man brought nearer than other men are at once to man and God.*' The human heart, says a recent writer, 'desires one who is greater, purer, kinder, *freer* than itself,—one standing aloof from its conscious falseness, its self-confessed littleness. It must be a life having something sacrificial in it,—something which will oftentimes compel the man to put a space between his own soul and the souls upon which his desires and prayers are set; he must free himself from every disturbing element, and be content to depart from his brethren in many things and at many seasons, so that he may abide with them for ever in a truer, deeper fellowship than any which is founded upon the conditions of an earthly amity. Unsecularity is the strength and glory of the Christian priesthood; the agency they deal with is one which, like that of some great mechanic force, must work *apart* from that on which it is brought to bear; its power is lost in conformity; it lives in transformation—in renewal; it is content to die in its own individual hopes and interests, so that, falling within the wide field of humanity, it may, in dying, bring forth much fruit.'

"Such a man, relieved from the necessity of making sermons without end, and freed from all undue pressure of other obligations, whether philanthropic or religious, *would have time*, and would therefore be expected to live much in quiet meditation; to cultivate the 'meekness of wisdom,' rather than brilliancy of talent; *to be*, as well as to teach, what the Christian life requires of us all.

"Chosen, as in this case he would be, not for his eloquence, his zeal, or his learning, so much as for his sanctified good sense,

his gentleness of character, his sweetness of disposition, his quick sympathy, his holiness of life, and his moral power over others, he would move among his people with the tenderness and love of the nurse who cherisheth her children, and would enter in no slight degree into the experience of that great apostle who could say to his converts, 'I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you.'—(*O. C.*, pp. 101—103.)

The random assertion :—

"How comes our author into the possession of such an *inhuman creed*?"—(*E. R.*, p. 441.)

"You are lost souls, heirs of wrath ; but help yourselves and God help you, for we have no commission."—(*E. R.*, p. 441.)

"A more *thorough-going piece of Antinomian heresy* we have not for a long time read or seen."—(*E. R.*, p. 446.)

"Like all of his order he has, and seems as if he would demand in others, *some scepticism* in certain portions of revealed truth."—(*E. R.*, p. 443.)

The voice of the book :—As to the *inhuman creed*,

"The salvation of all men cannot be dependent upon their hearing of Christ, and believing upon Him in this life ; for, as the apostle says, 'How *can* they hear without a preacher ?' "—(*O. C.*, p. 9.)

"Let us *rest*, then, in the conviction that God's love to sinners is not limited by time ; that there is at least a possibility of forgiveness in other worlds than this ; that the lost here are not necessarily all lost hereafter ; that, consequently, the eternal happiness or misery of the human race hangs on something far better than the zeal or the devotion of weak and fallible mortals."—(*O. C.*, p. 89.)

"John Foster but expresses the most reasonable of judgments when he says that 'the ordinary orthodox view represents God as acting in a secondary or subordinate capacity to the human instruments He employs ; since it supposes Him practically to say to His Church, 'If you zealously labour for men's salvation, I will save them ; otherwise not.' According to this, the final state of a large portion of the human race is placed at the disposal of a certain order of human beings, who might have effected their salvation if they would,—a conclusion which,' he adds, 'I think borders on impiety.' "—(*O. C.*, p. 87.)

The *Antinomianism* of the work may be judged of from the following :—

"When any nation, *as such*, adopts Christianity, and professes to

govern itself by the law of Christ, compromise is inevitable, and the conventionalisms of a *Christianized* community necessarily take the place of the sterner and more rigid demands of the Master. But what the nation does *as an organized whole* is seldom surpassed by the individuals of which it is composed. The all but inevitable result, under such conditions, is *the general lowering, in practical life, of a standard regarded as too high for the world as it is, although the original ideal of right as laid down in 'the Book' may still be taught, and, in the abstract, revered.* Nothing is more certain than that every one of us is likely to become 'better or worse morally, to advance or to retrograde socially, according to the standard of life which prevails around us—a standard which we are each individually helping to depress or to raise.' The difficulty of rising above this level is felt by every one who aspires after a truly noble and spiritual life."—(*O. C.*, p. 43.)

The *Scepticism* demanded appears, I suppose, in passages like the following :—

"I have said, and I am sure with truth, that the present age is *an age of feeble convictions.* But a disciple of Christ should be known quite as much *by the strength of his belief* as by the harmony of his conduct with the teachings of the Book by which he professes to be guided.

"I do not mean to affirm that such a man *must* necessarily hold this or that theory of inspiration ; or that he must deny the existence of a human element in the Bible, *without which* it would not have been fit for its purpose, but with which is inevitably associated a certain amount of liability to error, *in cases where verbal accuracy is not all important,* and where, therefore, it has not been secured by verbal inspiration. But I do maintain that his convictions must be of a kind and character *very far above* all such considerations ; that they must be unfaltering and unassailable,—deep as the consciousness he has of his own responsibility to God, and indelible as the very instincts of his nature.

"Evidences set forth in books,—however valuable and important in their place,—can never supply what is needed. The belief on which a man is to live must rest on experience ; on an experience not less real than that which guides him in daily life ; which gives him an unshaken confidence in the regularity of the laws of nature, and which leads him, day by day, to stake all that is dear to him on the stability of the material world. The first preachers of the Gospel triumphed in consequence of their unshaken confidence in the certainty of that GREAT BODY OF FACTS on which they rested all they taught.



They *knew* in whom they had believed, and by the force of that knowledge they conquered in an age which was even more sceptical than our own. This alone is, properly speaking, FAITH."—(O. C., pp. 141, 142.)

The way of *handling Scripture* called "narrow and miserable," is that which protests against any use of Bible texts which is inconsistent with their original meaning. Will the Editor, on this subject, listen for a moment to two men, by no means undistinguished either for learning or piety? The one is Dr. John Pye Smith, who thus writes:—

"It may be asked,—Are we not at liberty to take striking passages of Scripture, and apply them to new and important purposes, upon a principle of accommodation? Permit me to answer this question by asking another. Are we at liberty to put any meaning upon the Word of God different from *its own* proper, designed, and genuine sense, as ascertained by competent investigation?"—(*Prin. of Int.* 1831.)

The other is Archbishop Whately, who observes—

"I think it dangerous and hardly reverent to apply any passage of Scripture to a purpose foreign from the context. If what we mean to recommend is taught in *other* passages of Scripture, *those* ought to be the ones adduced; if again, without being expressly taught, it is agreeable to Scripture and to reason, let it rest on those grounds. But a misapplication of a Scripture text, though it may be harmless in some particular instance, affords countenance to a most pernicious practice."—(*Life and Cor.*, vol. i.)

After the terrible exposure I have been obliged to make, it is to me peculiarly gratifying to be able to recognize anything truthful in an article which, at first sight, would seem to be from beginning to end, *one lengthened lie*.

Let me say then at once that the Editor speaks truly of the author when he supposes him to allow that he has been "honoured to do very *little good* in the world." Nobody can be more sensible of this than himself, although he certainly does not give thanks *on that account*.

He is quite right also in affirming that 'Organized Christianity' is being "read in many circles in different parts of the kingdom," and that "it is just the book to satisfy the cravings of *innumerable* hosts growing up in our Churches." I cannot however agree with him in thinking such cravings to be "morbid," or that they are felt only by persons "who eke out the shortcomings of their own inability by scoffing at, or arguing against all well-meant effort." I am sorry to find that in his opinion "innumerable hosts" of such scoffers are to be found in Congregational churches.

Regarding the article *as a whole*, I can only say I pity the man who could write such trash, and still more the religious body that is thus represented in its "Congregational Review." Archbishop Whately somewhere says that "a *genuine* reviewer is a mixture of haughty self-conceit and flippant buffoonery—an ancient mountebank and a merry-andrew combined." Add to this the recklessness both of style and statement which characterizes the "penny-a-liner," and you will have some modern editors painted to the life.

I wonder whether the august writer of the "Eclectic" ever reads what he pens. Only in February last,—while disagreeing with its conclusions,—he says of this same "Organized Christianity"—

"It is written by a thoughtful and well-read man. . . . "Let those who are minded to see what an intelligent, earnest man has to say on this subject, and how he calmly pours out his sense of disappointment over the failure of all the aggressive actions the Church has put forth, read this book." . . . "A doctrine like his was a gospel to us twenty-five or thirty years since, and we are quite aware of its side of spiritual strength, and that if every lover of and believer in the Saviour had an equally intense and earnest nature, 'light of the world' and 'salt of the earth' believers would assuredly be." (*E. R.*, Feb., 1866, p. 185-6.)

I am afraid the fact is, that up to this hour he is quite ignorant of the contents of the book he has *twice* undertaken to review. But if so, *where is his conscience?* Where also, I might ask, is the conscience of the religious public in relation to transgressions of this character? None are so little thought of; none are so readily condoned; yet none are so demoralizing; none so likely to deprave the moral sentiment of the Christian community. How fearfully low, then, must the state of public opinion in the religious world be in relation to matters of this kind, when such gross deviations from right, excite no remark beyond perhaps an expression of surprize that any one should think it worth while to notice them.

But enough of this wretched production. I gladly turn from its absurdities to address a few words to the ministers of that particular body to which the Editor belongs. Among them are not a few whom I am proud to number amongst my best friends, and a rather extended acquaintance with others has led me to think and speak of them generally as men who, in not a few points, are far ahead of the laity in their desires for the edification of the flock.

In relation to "Organized Christianity," some of them have not hesitated to bear witness to "its unselfish and disinterested motives, to its purity of aim, and to the justness of much that it contains." Others have told me how much they "sympathize with, and appreciate its broad, catholic, and unsectarian spirit," and some I know, are even now endeavouring, with a wise cautiousness, to test its suggestions by experience.

To such—to *all*, indeed, I am anxious to state as simply as may be, *what* I aim at, and *the means* by which I seek the accomplishment of that which I desire to see effected.



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To such—to *all*, indeed, I am anxious to state as simply as may be, *what* I aim at, and *the means* by which I seek the accomplishment of that which I desire to see effected.

Ten years ago, I ventured to say, in a little book now all but out of print,\* that—

“In an age and country like our own, the Church and the world act and re-act on each other, with unusual rapidity and force. *From THE CHURCH*, the world takes both its notions of religion, and its basis of morality. *By* the Church its manners are chastened, its laws modified, its tone elevated, and its opinions in many respects formed and guided.

“*From THE WORLD*, on the other hand, the Church receives status, money, and social respect. *By* the World, its enthusiasm is more or less checked, its ideal of right somewhat lowered, its standard of practical godliness kept down.

“Mutually influencing each other in this friendly spirit, antagonism in time altogether ceases; something like compromise takes place; reviling is exchanged for regard; and the lion and the lamb ‘lie down’ together so peacefully, that ‘a little child’ might ‘lead them.’ Hand in hand, the old opponents walk together, mutually rejoicing in the advance of civilization, the humanizing of society, the triumphs of science, the binding together of nations, the spread of commerce, and the coming of that golden age when, witnessing the fulfilment alike of heathen and of Jewish prophecy, the world shall at length become the dwelling-place of a happy and united brotherhood.

“Such are the facts of the case. Of course there is a shady side to the picture, for sin and misery, vice and want, abound as much as ever, and men generally are too restless to be happy. But since everything in this world has its counterbalance, why should we dwell on that which only produces sadness? So men reason.”

That, to some extent, this state of things is the natural and necessary result of the spread of Christianity cannot be denied.

“A Christian, in the days of the Apostles, differed from other men *outwardly*, as much as *inwardly*. He was, commonly, either a wanderer or an outcast; for the life that was around him, whether private or social or public, involved, at every turn, practices which were in themselves absolutely corrupting or blasphemous. But the reverse of all this is the case now, the distinction in question being almost entirely *inward*.

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\* “‘The Spirit of Truth,’ a Supplement to ‘The Comforter,’” by Delta.



“ A Christian, in the present day, is simply one who makes daily war *within*, against evils to which others willingly submit ; and in him, as has been beautifully said, we may view ‘ the picture of a man struggling with effect against his earth-born propensities, and yet hateful to himself for the very existence of them,—holier than any of the people around him, and yet humbler than them all,—realizing, from time to time, a positive increase to the grace and excellency of his character, and yet becoming more tenderly conscious every day of its remaining deformities,—gradually expanding in attainment, as well as in desire, towards the light and the liberty of heaven, and yet groaning under a yoke, from which death alone will fully emancipate him.’

“ But if things *as they are*, may be, in some degree, regarded as of God, they are not *wholly* so. So far as the world is benefited, however indirectly, by the influence of the Church, God is well pleased ; but *so far* as the Church is cooled in its zeal, or its ideal of good lowered, or the range of its principles limited by its intercourse with the World, so far it is disloyal to its Lord, and a traitor to its trust.”

We ask then, *has* the standard of godliness *as a fact* been lowered in consequence of the extension of a religious profession ? It is not for me to decide this grave question. I can only state what, right or wrong, is *the general opinion* of Christianized society.

“ There can be no question whatever, that if it were possible to stand in Cheapside, and to compel every passer-by, one by one, to give, to the best of his belief, a distinct and straightforward answer to this inquiry,—“ Do you perceive, or do you believe, that there is *any perceptible difference* in the conduct of Christian persons, as compared with that of others, in the dealings of the mart, the Stock Exchange, the share market, the counting-house, the warehouse, and the shop ? Are they *as a class*, supposed to be less greedy of gain, more honourable, more truthful, more disinterested than others ? the all but universal answer would be—No !

“ If employers of labour were, in like terms, required to state the particulars in which Christian servants, male or female, high or low in rank, differed from worldly ones, it is equally certain that their reply, with a few striking exceptions, would be, ‘ There is no difference at all.’

“ And if, leaving both these classes, literary men,—editors of journals, reviews, magazines,—were in turn also desired to state

their conscientious belief, whether *religious* newspapers and periodicals were or were not, *as a whole*, distinguished by greater candour, a wider charity, more truthfulness in statement, more conscientiousness in quotation, a greater absence of anything like pandering to the interests of party or the unreasonableness of prejudice, than secular journals? it cannot be doubted, that with one voice, they would express their inability to discover any such distinction."

The fact is, the *relative* position of the parties has changed.

"The advance of the one has not been accompanied by corresponding advance in the other,—things necessarily assume a new aspect, and the following alternative seems to present itself,—Either the distinction between the Church and the World, of which we talk so much, will soon become altogether fictitious, *or*, some great onward movement must again place the Church on higher ground, and once more make it, *in the eyes of all men*, 'A CITY SET ON AN HILL.'

"But how is this to be brought about?

"Not, certainly, as many excellent Churchmen have thought, by the revival of mediæval devotion, practices, or claims. Not, assuredly, as others, equally devoted, whether in or out of the Establishment, have hoped, by showers of Divine grace, falling, in answer to our prayers, upon churches and missions, whether at home or abroad; for *both* these expectations proceed on the belief, that existing views and agencies are, unquestionably, Divine in their character, and that, therefore, the mechanism of Earth, however feeble and defective, is destined, ere long, to be moved by nothing less than the omnipotence of Heaven."

"A few more words in conclusion, and then these imperfect, though by no means hasty thoughts, shall be cast like 'bread upon the waters,' in the firm belief that, whether neglected or scorned now, they will be found, and do their work, 'after many days.'

"The VISIBLE UNITY of the Church in all important matters, and the visible MORAL ELEVATION of Christians as a body, over those by whom they are surrounded, are the conditions under which alone true Christianity can advance in the world. But *how* these great blessings are to be secured, it is hard to say: it is the problem that this age or the next *must* solve, and it may be that, in either case, the solution will involve much suffering. Perhaps it is *impossible* that Christians should unite, before God has scattered them, or that the Church should be *re-formed*, before God has broken it up. Perhaps in no other way is it practicable, to make men *feel* and act upon the

conviction, that creeds are not Christianity, and that Scripture, as an authority, stands alone. Perhaps, never till they are deprived of Christian ordinances, will they be able to perceive their true meaning and value ; to understand how it comes to pass, that the same preaching, which is needful for the feeble, ' enfeebles the strong ; ' that what are called ' religious advantages,' may easily become in practice great and fatal disadvantages,—so that many who, but for these things, would long since have been teachers of others, still ' need to be taught the first principles of the oracles of God ; ' that men may have the Bible in their hands, and yet cherish fraudulent designs in their hearts ; that banks may be opened with prayer, and yet end in gigantic swindling : and that *all this may arise*, from the habitual separation, in Christian society, of doctrinal truth and moral truth,—a distinction quite unknown to the Apostles,—leading, as it invariably does, to the exaltation of the one, as the *root* of all goodness, and the consequent depression of the other, as mere secular virtue, which is sure to follow the reception of the Gospel."

I make these quotations in order to shew that, whatever may be the merits or demerits of any of my opinions, that which I have advanced has at least been well considered and carefully weighed ; that it is idle to say my remarks spring from " a spirit of impatience with quiet labour ; " and wicked to affirm that "*the very intention of the writer*" is to "*prevent*" sinners from being brought to Christ ; to discourage the instruction of the young ; or to induce men to withdraw their subscriptions from any Missionary Society whatever."—(*E. R.*, p. 442.)\*

In "Organized Christianity" the *object* I have in view is thus stated :—

"To form and to fix a higher Christian ideal than now prevails ; to rescue the *peculiar moralities* of the Gospel from the conventionalisms which now choke them, and to create and sustain *within the Christian body* a public opinion of its own,—a judgment of things

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\* The author does not believe that anything he has ever written has *this tendency*. He has no wish to speak of himself, but he may perhaps be permitted to say that his own subscriptions to Missionary Societies or to any other organization for spreading the Gospel have not been diminished in consequence of the views he has been led to adopt.



which the world, however Christianized, will never accept, but which is nevertheless in strict accordance with the teaching of the Lord.—(O. C., p. 171.)

“The truth is, whether we recognize it or not, that the greater part of the morality practised day by day by all classes is *purely conventional*. We all shrink from adopting any course which seems to condemn others; *sometimes*, like religious slave-owners, playing our pleasant deceptions off in the face of the plainest truths, and *always* forgetful that we are using an instrument subtle enough and elastic enough to accommodate practical life to any standard which may, at any period, happen to prevail in Christianized society. Thus it is man lowers the heavenly to the earthly; and, whether a preacher or a hearer, too often contrives to depress the Divine law to that which he considers the absolute requirements of ordinary life.

“The scepticism of the eighteenth century sprang up in a soil of this character; that of the nineteenth, destined, I fear, to prove eventually more desolating than its predecessor, *because connected with far more activity of mind, and a deeper earnestness in relation to life and its responsibilities*, can only be checked by an end being put to the strange contrasts between words and things which now so perplex men.”—(O. C., pp. 167—168.)

The following remarks may be taken for what they are worth. No man, at all events, will be the worse for pondering them.

“The Nonconformist bodies, originating for the most part in secession from the national establishment, and professing to realize a higher and purer communion,—untrammelled by the State, and free to act according to the dictates of conscience,—have no hindrance to contend with beyond that which arises from their own public opinion leading them to attempt, so far as their ability extends, *the very same work* which the Church of England is ever trying to do, viz., to *Christianize the community*, by promoting a mixed worship, and by spreading as far as they can the knowledge of God, through public preaching, the visitation of the poor, and such other means as may seem likely to answer the end. Their main object, indeed, seems to be to prove that they can do this work *better* than the Church of England; that voluntary societies are for Christian purposes preferable to endowed agencies; that the support of the State in such work is unfavourable to purity, to freedom, and to vigour.

“But is this their calling of God? Has it not led, and is it not sure to lead, just in proportion as equality makes way, to all the evils that beset established communions? to the recognition of a profes-

sional order of religious teachers, and to the love of power and of social and political influence, so far as it can be obtained, either by popular speech, or by ecclesiastical organization? I think *it does*, and must continue to do so while human nature is unchanged. Is not this tendency increasingly visible in rivalries of various kinds? in Gothic buildings, in expensive edifices, in steeples, in desires for liturgical services, in chants, in artistic singing, in the use of organs, in ritualistic tastes, in decorations, in altar-cloths over communion tables, and in a growing dislike to, and contempt for, all notions that are anti-clerical?—(*O. C.*, pp. 187—188.)

The *means* by which the desired end,—the elevation of the Christian body,—is most likely to be accomplished must, of course, be open to discussion. My own conviction is that preaching (using that word in its modern and technical sense) cannot do more than it has done; that the press will be found equally powerless; that something more, and something different from that which now is, has become absolutely essential. But to advocate *innovation* is, just as much among Dissenters as among others, to breast at once obloquy and opposition, popular prejudice, and reproach from all those who consider that institutions which they regard as sacred may perchance be endangered or overturned. Of such I have no hope;—“their carcasses must fall in the wilderness;” but the rising generation may perhaps “be kept untainted, and brought into a good land.”\*

I am far, however, from wishing to dogmatize on a subject so beset with difficulties. I simply throw out the following suggestions for the consideration of all whom they may concern.

“Changes are clearly coming over us, the direction and extent of which few care to contemplate; and perhaps nothing now can stay their course. That *preaching*, from some cause or other, is *going down* in public estimation must, I fear, be admitted. That in

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\* Archbishop Whately.

exactly the same proportion a love of ritualism is rising up seems little less certain. Nor can it be otherwise if our existing church and chapel system is right in principle ; \* for a mixed crowd or congregation can only be kept together and interested in one of two ways—either by oratory or by ritualism. If preaching fall into disrepute, nothing will retain the multitude but some æsthetic form of worship. If the ear be not regaled, the eye must be attracted. If the intellect be not addressed, the senses must.

“ I am not, of course, imagining that preaching will, in any case, be given up, for even in the Romish Church it is a wonderful element of power. I am merely intimating my belief that the *tendency of the time* is to get away from the Presbyterian idea, which regards the church as mainly, if not exclusively, a place of theological instruction ; and to get nearer to the Anglican idea, which regards the pulpit as altogether subordinate to the altar. As a consequence, while what is popularly, although inappropriately, called Puseyism spreads among Episcopalians, the opinion deepens and widens among Nonconformists, that in public services *more prominence* should be given to the worship of the Church, and less to its teaching.

“ I do not wonder at this. It but expresses the natural want of many spiritually minded Christians. But let it not be forgotten, that to have spiritual worship you must have spiritual worshippers ; that to the outside world, to the formal and the irreligious, who form so large a part of ordinary congregations, the strengthening of the worshipping element *means* the exaltation of ritualism, and *nothing else*.

“ What, then, must we do ? Our choice clearly lies between *moving forward* on the line so many are now following, or *stepping backward* to an extent which will altogether change our position in the eye of the world, and call for no little sacrifice and self-denial.

“ This, however, is the path I invite the Nonconformists of England to tread, and to tread it boldly, without distinction of sect or party, regardless of trust-deeds, of denominational interests, of property, of everything that keeps real Christians apart from each other ; regardless,

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\* At the recent meeting of the Baptist Union, the Rev. J. H. Hinton is said by the *Freeman* and other papers to have “ denounced public worship as a solecism in thought and an hypocrisy in act.” He said, “ there was not an example of public worship in the whole Bible.” He thought “ public worship one of the great misfortunes of the age, and if there was one thing more offensive than another, it was the amount of hypocrisy presented in so called public worshipping services.” These remarks, however startling, may serve to throw light on some observations made in “ Organized Christianity,” chapter vii., on “ the Preacher and the Gospel.”



too, of theological opinions, whether right or wrong ; of the views of Baptists or Pædobaptists, of Calvinists or Arminians, regardless of all creeds and confessions save one—‘ Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God ;’ merging all other considerations in the one cardinal qualification for fellowship—faith in the Divine Redeemer, and earnest desire to know and do His will. Then would the song, ‘ Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ ! ’ rise to heaven with new acceptance, since it would swallow up every other cry, and embody in its capacious bosom the spoils of the theological universe.

“ Nothing is more certain than that until the Church awakes to *judgment of itself*, will secessions, greater or smaller, *originating* in felt wants, and therefore drawing in their wake some of the best, the most single-hearted, and the most godly amongst us, from time to time first *witness* against that which is wrong, and then *wither* by becoming wrong in the very act of witness ; wither, by becoming narrow, bigoted, and uncharitable, first claiming the right of *judging* those who differ from them, and then exercising the right in still fiercer judgments on one another.

“ One word more and I have done. Is there a Christian man, worthy of the name, who knows nothing of that irrepressible sadness which so often steals over the spirit as we become more and more conscious how far, as individuals, we fall short of that high calling which is presented to us alike in Scripture and in the depths of our own consciousness ? Is there one who would not reject, almost with indignation, the pretence that our noblest aspirations are the mere offspring of discontent—that to soar above the earth is vain—that to strive after perfection is to weary oneself for nought ?

“ Why, then, should such persons think they do well to be angry, when the same order of thought is confronted with the Church and its institutions ? Why should men *welcome* the suggestion that to doubt *its* condition is but to indicate a cynical spirit—to be a fault-finder, dissatisfied, unthankful ? If it be not right to take complacency in what we individually are, is it otherwise than unlawful to glorify what we call “ the Church,” by which I mean *that particular ecclesiastical organization or institution* which we most favour ? Is it permissible to magnify its worth, to exaggerate its value, to be so jealous regarding it, as on no account to allow it to be touched ? Is it right to regard it as a thing too sacred to be questioned, too heavenly to be reformed ? Here, too, if we will believe it, there is room for a Divine sadness.”—(*O. C.*, pp. 188—192.)

I have not attempted to conceal my belief that any advance in the direction I advocate supposes a willing-

ness on the part of Christian fellowships *to risk* much in the way of income, popularity, and standing in the world.

“It supposes *more than willingness* on the part of pastors to resign exclusive privilege, and to place themselves on a level with their brethren; for unless they diligently sought out and encouraged suitable persons to unite with them in teaching; unless they *pressed* the performance of the duty as a high Christian obligation; unless they themselves habitually kept as much as possible in the background; unless, in short, they earnestly *desired* the change, and were led to perceive that whatever trials might attend its introduction it would ultimately be as great a blessing to themselves as to their people, all attempts to establish it must end in failure.

“Let obstacles, however, be what they may, it must not be forgotten, as Vinet well puts it, that ‘we can never fairly charge to a principle the difficulties and hindrances that attend a return to that principle if it has been long mistaken or forgotten; or if the contrary principle, organized long ago in society, has penetrated all its parts and modified all its elements.’”—(*O. C.*, p. 172.)

THE END.

## MR. THOMAS COOPER.

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WE have been exceedingly grieved to see, in the *Freeman* newspaper, letters from this great and noble man—the first, we believe, of living lecturers—to the people, announcing his inability, by illness, to fulfil his public engagements; and his involuntary retreat, for some time, from the arduous nightly engagements, to the sick room, and the ministering offices of affection and friendship. We know with what unselfishness he has pursued his toilsome way of attempting to disseminate the loftiest Christian truths, by illustrations and language, themselves often of almost the highest order of sublimity. Mr. Cooper's persistent determination—against which we ourselves have remonstrated with him—never to charge fees, or even travelling expenses, for his lectures; but to leave himself at the mercy of collections, etc., deeming this to be his duty, as most illustrating the spirit of gospel freedom, and being most likely to undo the errors growing out of the seed sown by him in a similar manner before his days of restored conviction and conversion—all this, we say, has, we fear, not been likely to work very profitably—lectures, which overwhelmed our spirits by their logical closeness and coherence; their rich and apt fertility of unexpected illustration; their familiarity; their glowing and passionate eloquence. We heard of the delivery of four of them in one of our chief London chapels; but they did not, it seemed, cover the cost for the use of the chapel and the bills; and, at their close, Mr. Cooper was brought in a debtor some pounds. Ultimately, the charge for the use of the chapel was remitted; and he received, we believe, *one pound*. A few haps of this kind, in the course of labour, in which the labourer at best receives but little, may very naturally excite our fears that there may be little provision for months of sickness, and advancing age; hence, without any communication whatever from Mr. Cooper, or from any friend of Mr. Cooper's; knowing no more than any one may know, through the public prints, of his illness; voluntarily and from a profound sense of his worth, of his many attainments, his high and cultivated genius, we venture to express a hope that something may be done to serve him. We believe his address at present is—and he may always be found through—

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